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# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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## *'THE DELIGHTFUL FELLOW.'*

EDWARD FITZGERALD AND FREDERICK SPALDING.

BY E. V. LUCAS.

It is well known from the published volumes of Edward FitzGerald's letters, and from other sources, that he had a few close illustrious friends, some of whom used to stay with him, such as both the Tennysons, Thackeray, E. B. Cowell, James Spedding, W. H. Thompson, Master of Trinity, W. B. Donne, William Airy, Archdeacon Groome, George Borrow, and George Crabbe, junior, and his son; while he was on intimate epistolary terms with Fanny Kemble, Charles Eliot Norton, Samuel Laurence, the artist, W. F. Pollock and Thomas Carlyle. We know also that among fellow-townsmen who were his intimates were Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet and head clerk in Alexander's Bank; Tom Churchyard, the lawyer, who painted like a good amateur and collected and extolled Constable and Crome; Loder the bookseller; and Berry the gunmaker, over whose shop on the Woodbridge Market-place FitzGerald lodged for several years, until the new Mrs. Berry made the place untenable. I personally know, too, for I had the story from her own lips, that little gay Ellen Churchyard was continually at FitzGerald's house, and that he was on close terms with various Suffolk gentry, such as the Biddells and Major Moor.

We are aware also how fond he was of 'Posh,' the nickname of Joseph Delly Fletcher, the captain of his boat and a

boat-owner and fisherman himself ; a steadfast, if sometimes too festive, companion, from whose lips many of the 'Sea-Phrases' were gathered, and who was the chief of several of FitzGerald's Lowestoft associates. As though Aldis Wright had neglected it in *Two Suffolk Friends*, Francis Hindes Groome emphasises FitzGerald's fondness for this maritime society ; but you will find not a little about the *Scandal* and the *Meum and Teum* in Wright's edition of the *Letters*, together with certain glimpses of 'Posh'—such as, to E. B. Cowell in 1869, 'You can't think what a grand, tender Soul this is, lodged in a suitable carcase,' and, when commissioning a portrait of 'Posh' by Samuel Laurence to hang next to his Thackeray and Tennyson, 'with whom he shares a certain grandeur of Soul and Body.'

We should, however, know much less of Lowestoft and 'Posh' and company, were it not for the diary of Frederick Spalding, a copy of which, through the kindness of the owner, Mr. Gerald Spalding, of Norwich, has been given to me by the Honorary Secretary of the Omar Khayyám Club, Mr. John Henderson. The diarist was a young Woodbridge corn-and-coal merchant to whom, at the outset of his business career, FitzGerald lent five hundred pounds (afterwards turned into a gift), and with whom he spent many a conversational and sometimes mildly convivial hour. Miss Spalding, who is still living, remembers that a supply of churchwarden pipes was kept at their house against FitzGerald's visits, and that her mother used to prepare the mouth-pieces with sealing-wax.

Frederick Spalding, whom she describes as an 'outdoor man,' with an exceptional knowledge of birds and wild flowers, was born in 1835, and thus was FitzGerald's junior by twenty-six years. Although a man of lively interests and a picture-lover, in general culture he may have been

somewhat far to seek, especially when we read FitzGerald's correspondence with, say, Cowell or Donne ; but friendships are based on invisible sympathies, and that Spalding and the transfuser of Omar perfectly understood each other, entries in the Diary constantly indicate. In fact, FitzGerald, when giving Spalding his own school copy of Boswell's *Johnson*, wrote on the flyleaf, with a direct implication : ' He was pleased to say to me one morning when we were alone in his study, " Boswell, I am almost easier with you than with anybody." ' "

Burne-Jones, writing to C. E. Norton, says something about the ' much ' that FitzGerald gave his friends and the ' little he got from them ' ; but Spalding should not be included with those. In acquaintance with Spalding, as with ' Posh,' Fitzgerald seems to have found a real refuge. Spalding was, in fact, good for him, as we say. The FitzGerald of the *Letters* is always a lonely, and too often an even forlorn, figure ; but at Spalding's he was animated.

I might here interpolate a passage from that far from satisfactory book, which it is a mercy that its central figure could never see, the *Life of Edward FitzGerald*, by the late Thomas Wright of Olney. On the strength of possessing a certain number of FitzGerald's unpublished letters, access to other material (which did not, however, include Frederick Spalding's Diary), and having heard a great deal of gossip about FitzGerald, Mr. Wright felt himself predestined to perform his biographical task. Much of what he has to say in his two huge volumes is ill-digested and negligible : but now and then I find him illuminating. Thus, of Spalding, he wrote : ' His house, which was tiled, stood next to a slated house, at a short distance from Little Grange, and FitzGerald would often point to the roofs and remark how much pleasanter the tiled one looked. " Why," said he,

"will people have cold-looking slates instead of warm-looking red tiles? Better by far have the dear old mouse-coloured thatch." Spalding subsequently went into business on his own account, but in spite of very great help from FitzGerald was not successful. The truth is, his mind was with his natural history collections and curiosities, and not with his ledger. He was more interested in coins of Constantine the Great than pieces stamped with the head of Victoria. He would thank you more for a rare moth than for introducing a customer. "I was born," Spalding once lamented, "with tastes beyond my means." . . . What to do with Spalding was with FitzGerald a kind of Eastern Question.'

So far, Thomas Wright of Olney. To this I may add that as early as August 31, 1876, FitzGerald was writing to the other Wright, Aldis, his friend and editor: 'Mr. Spalding is still here, but I cannot learn that his Future is yet provided for. Meanwhile, he seems happy to talk of Coins, Celts, Birds, Eggs, Pictures, etc. If he could muster sufficient Capital he would do best in a Curiosity Shop; or (without Capital) as an Assistant, if not Chief, at some Museum. He has really accurate Knowledge, as well as real Taste and Liking, in such matters: and is moreover a very amiable and civilised Man.'

Later in this year, 1876, Spalding, having given up his Woodbridge business, moved to Hadleigh and afterwards to Cambridge; but it was not until 1885 that, posthumously, but probably through FitzGerald's influence, he was established. FitzGerald, writing again to Aldis Wright in 1882, had said, 'The only thing we really can do with the delightful fellow is to get him a place in some museum'; and, says the other Wright, Thomas of Olney, this came about. In 1885, 'Spalding got appointed curator of the Castle Museum

at Colchester, and there among Roman, Norman and Gothic ruins, in a charming old castle (built for him eight hundred years previous by some jolly old mail-clad baron), among coins, old pottery, metal curios, and fragments of armour, he lived a perfectly congenial life. The square man had got into the square hole. He was happy ever after.'

Mr. Wright further tells us that the book which FitzGerald gave to Spalding with Dr. Johnson's words in it was not *Boswell* but Miss Edgeworth's *Frank*; but this point needs clearing up.

Enough is said here to convince us that this shy and fastidious recluse had found another affinity; and indeed the total effect of the Diary and of the numerous letters to Spalding is to show how affectionate to those of his neighbours whom he liked FitzGerald could be. The ordinary impression, that he was inclined to an appearance of superiority or to a frigidity that may have discouraged his humbler acquaintances, is indeed wholly disproved, and the translator from the Persian is seen to be most humanly Suffolk. In fact 'affectionate' is the word, and we are continually reminded of Carlyle's description of him in a letter to C. E. Norton: 'the peaceable, affectionate and ultra-modest man.'

That Spalding was conscious of the honour paid him by FitzGerald, we learn again and again, but perhaps most of all from this passage on the day of FitzGerald's funeral: 'I have lost my dearest and best friend. I shall ever remember him with Respect, Love and Gratitude. I shall never know or meet his like upon earth, and I heartily thank God that I have known him well, and in a small measure been able to appreciate him.'

Since all students of FitzGerald possess *Two Suffolk Friends*, and since I am wishing this article to be new, I am quoting very little from that book, but now and then may occur a

passage from the letters to Spalding printed by Francis Hindes Groome, repeated here for the sake of stress. Thus, to Spalding from Lowestoft, 'I always feel at home here'; and again, 'Somehow I do believe the Seaside is more of my Element than elsewhere, and the old lodging life suits me best'; and again, of 'Posh's' entourage: 'Oh, these are the People who somehow interest me; and if I were not now too advanced on the Road to Forgetfulness, I should be sad that my own Life had been such a wretched Concern in comparison. But it's too late, even to lament now. . . .'

Before coming to the Diary, I should like to remark on the odd circumstance that the authorised edition of FitzGerald's correspondence, edited by Aldis Wright, wholly neglects the letters to Spalding. How and why this is so is a mystery; for Wright knew Spalding personally, and at Hindes Groome's disposal were placed by Spalding no fewer than seventy letters from FitzGerald which might, one would think, have come within Wright's purview. Some day there must, of course, be a new and completer edition. (Messrs. Macmillan, please copy.)

Of the seventy letters lent to Francis Hindes Groome, twenty-three which I have been permitted to see have recently been in the possession of Messrs. Maggs, the autograph-dealers. But where are the other forty-seven? One at any rate I know to be preserved in the Huntington Library at Pasadena; but are the others there too?

The years covered by the Diary are from 1863 to 1883, when FitzGerald died—suddenly, in his sleep, on a visit to George Crabbe, the grandson of the poet, at Merton Rectory; the letters now accessible begin with November 17, 1863, and continue almost to the end. In the first, FitzGerald adjures his young acquaintance, then twenty-eight: 'Pray come and see me and the Picture: you are really to believe

that I am always very glad to see you, and that you will never take me by surprise, enter when you will. I say this because you may perhaps have thought you *did* take me by surprise when last you came. But it was not you at all. I have a great respect for Mr. [illegible] quite as much as for you yourself : but one can scarce tell why one is naturally more at home with one Man than with another ; and there are very few now of whose coming I would not know beforehand.'

I begin with a further extract or so from the letters. On July 17, 1865, FitzGerald writes from 11, Marine Terrace, Lowestoft, with a reference to two of 'Posh's' allies : 'Yes, I sent Newson and Cooper home to the dinner : and supposing they would be maudlin on Saturday, gave them Sunday to repent on : and so have lost the only fine Days we have yet had for sailing. To-day is a dead Calm. *These are my Trials*, as a fine Gentleman said to Wesley, when his Servant put rather too many Coals on the Fire. . . .'

—This particular entry is interesting as telling us something about FitzGerald's taste in humorous stories : always an indicative thing. He had found the passage while reading Wesley's *Journal*, and he quoted it not only in his *Polonius*, but included it in a letter to the Master of Trinity in 1869. Here is the authorised version : 'A gentleman of large fortune, while we were seriously conversing, ordered a servant to throw some coals on the fire. A puff of smoke came out. He threw himself back in his chair, and cried out, "O Mr. Wesley, these are the crosses I meet with every day !"'

Another story to which FitzGerald was partial, told to him by Donne, was of Lord Chatham bowing so low to any bishop whom he met, that from behind you could see the peak of his nose between his legs.



From Lowestoft, on November 28th, 1866 : 'To-morrow is your busy Day ; but would you tell Mr. Jefferies to send the Thackeray Drawing properly papered up, and directed to *Herman Biddell, Esq.*, at Mr. Berry's. For I dare say he will enquire for it to-morrow. . . . There is a 2nd Vol. of *Herodotus* on the Table by the Bow-window of my *Chateau* which I wish you would send to Mr. Berry, who will pack it to me, I hope, with a little Butter, a *decanted Bottle of Port Wine*, and a small packet of that *Will's Bristol Bird's Eye Tobacco*, which he can get for me at Grog's.'

And now for the Diary.

'August 7th, 1866. With Mr. FitzGerald on board his Yacht the "Scandal" to see Lowestoft Regatta.

'April 28th, 1867. Mrs. P. FitzGerald—Mrs. O'Dowd in *Vanity Fair*. Mrs. Thackeray's Mother—Mrs. McKenzie in *The Newcomes*. Mr. Purcel—the *good Uncle*, the Gentleman visited by Thackeray in the *Irish Sketch Book*.' Whether all these statements are quite accurate, I cannot say. When writing to Donne in 1865, FitzGerald's own words concerning his sister-in-law and Mrs. O'Dowd, run thus : 'I read your letter yesterday while sitting out on a Bench with her [his sister-in-law] : a brave Woman of the O'Dowd sort. . . .

'September 5th, 1867. Mr. FitzGerald told me that their old servant Greathurst died the other day—the same who spilled the plate of Turtle soup over old Lord Rochford's Breeches at dinner at Bredfield House and was always quarrelling with the Italian Cook. He was found one day settling their differences by knocking the Cook's head against the iron pump handle in the court yard.

'Mr. F. remembers his Grandfather coming to Bredfield House shooting, and sending for him into his room before getting up of a morning—when he always smelt strongly of

the Hair powder then used—and having great pictures from the wall set at the bed's foot, and pointing out Napoleon, Marshal Ney, and the different coloured uniforms of the French Army (it was during the war).

'September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1867. Mr. F. said of Mr. Cowell, who married his "Old Flame" Elizabeth Charlesworth, "I have met and known many learned and clever men, but Edward Cowell is the *greatest Scholar*."' It was, of course, Professor Cowell who had incited FitzGerald to take up the study of Omar, and who, when the transfusion was complete, deplored its irreligion.

At Geldeston 'September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1867. We saw the very fine view from the Churchyard down the Orwell—with the pond below where Mr. F. remembered going in a Boat as a boy and reading *Redgauntlet*, then just come out.

'September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1867. Supped with Mr. FitzGerald off 2 doz. oysters and a bottle of Jn o' Groat's Scotch Ale. He played his (Minima) organ while I ate my supper, and told me he had once a good portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds. *I* think gave Farrow five pounds for it? Laurence doubled it—but Maurice Moore damned *his judgment*, and went down on his knees to get a good sight and look at it. It was a portrait of Tom Potter—son of Archdeacon Potter who was Vicar of Lowestoft. Mr. F. thinks that Sir Joshua's Mother was a Potter, or that he was nearly related. Mr. F.'s Father had one of the best portraits, by Sir Joshua R., Mr. F. ever saw—of a Lady—not *very* handsome, good eyes and expression, but dress and all about it wonderfully painted. It was sold at the Bredfield House sale and Mr. F. has not been able to trace it. He gave his own to his Friend, Capt. William Brown, and *his* widow still has it.'

Where, I wonder, is it now? Spalding was being facetious about the ale. By John o' Groat he meant the Woodbridge

Boniface, John Grout, landlord of the Bull. According to Francis Hindes Groome, FitzGerald, whom Cowell described as 'no Sybarite,' used to warm Grout's Scotch ale until it 'just had a smile on it.' Every Christmas Grout sent him mince-pies and a jug of punch. Grout once said of Tennyson, who had been taken by FitzGerald to see him, that he might be a poet but he 'didn't fare to know much about hosses.'

The Diary again; and if anyone dares to use the word 'trivial' with regard to it, I should like to call him out. Nothing that has to do with FitzGerald is trivial: '*October 13th, 1867. To supper with Mr. FitzGerald. Revd. Wm. Airy told him that 40 years ago he went with his Brother (now Professor Airy) to see Wordsworth at his house at Rydal near Grasmere; that many people went to see Wordsworth's house and grounds, but W. generally kept out of the way, but sometimes stole amongst the servants and carriages to get a peep inside to see what books the company were carrying with them, or reading (perhaps expecting to see sometimes his own poems), but generally found some or one of Sir Walter Scott's novels.*

'Mr. F. never saw Wordsworth, but once met Southey walking very fast and reading as he walked.

'George Borrow. Mr. F. and Mowbray Donne were nearly the only friends that Borrow didn't quarrel with. They used to go to see B. at his house at Oulton, and he would row them on the Broad. B. married a Mrs. Clarke, who had some property, and when they were on the water she would ring the Lunch or Dinner Bell, to which he would not pay the slightest heed. As a young man his hair turned quite grey, he had very black bright eyes and a kind of weird look. At one time was very much amongst the gypsies, and they always looked on him as a kind of Brother. He was given to *Romance*, or exaggeration perhaps,

without hardly being conscious of it. He gave Mr. F. his "Romany Rye" who told him that part of it he didn't believe and *never could have happened*, quite expecting to be knocked down while telling him so.

'10 years ago when Mr. F. was living, or lodging, at Gorleston, Borrow was at Yarmouth and came to see Mr. F. Borrow drank strong Port and had a contempt for anyone who *could drink Sherry*. It was just at the time when Mr. F. was very unhappy, and this night drank a good deal of it, walked home with Borrow, and coming back, being very sleepy and tired, laid down on the grass by the roadside and fell asleep, not waking till 3 or 4 in the morning.

'Mr. F.'s Grandfather used to visit his Wife across St. James' Park about 4 times a year, a kind of visit of ceremony, and used to keep an Opera Dancer. Mr. F.'s Mother also used to go to see her Mother there, and called her Madam. He heard her once give his Mother a sound rating, saying, "My dear, you are a very fine Woman, but a *bad Mother*."

On October 20th, 1867, FitzGerald seems to have told Spalding a good deal about a famous local character named Turner, who was related to him. We have this passage: 'Jack Turner first made some money by a Lottery Ticket, and afterwards became very close and miserly. He would take Mr. FG. as a boy to Coutts' and Drummond's Banks, at each of which he had £30,000 laying *without paying Interest*, and was very proud of the attention shown him there by the Principals and Clerks, and desirous that others should see it.' As Turner left a large fortune without a proper will, it was divided among his kith and kin. 'Mr. F. was awarded £50, which sum, less £3 odd for expenses, was handed over to him, and being then short of money he paid Bills, etc., with it. Some time after some distant relations were found up, and by hard swearing, etc., they

made good their claim. The *whole* amount had to be *refunded*. Thus Mr. F. lost £3 and some shillings by the only Legacy he ever had.'

'Mr. F.'s Father and Mother once made him [Turner] give them and some friends a dinner. They had Salmon and Lamb, and on Mr. F., Senr., asking a Lady across the table to take some wine, Turner said "She has already had one glass."'

On October 20, 1867, the subject of absent-mindedness coming up, FitzGerald told Spalding that 'Mr. Gunn riding a pony and reading as he went along, the pony walked into a horse-pond and Mr. G. came to himself just as the water reached his knees. Mr. G.'s Father once went upstairs to dress for a late dinner party, and being a very long time they went to look for him and found him in bed.'—This incident may be common to those whose thoughts wander. At any rate it is told also of Mrs. Cornish of Eton.

'December 23rd, 1867. Mr. F. in speaking of Nelson's death said that it was quite untrue that Nelson wore his stars and decorations at Trafalgar, thus making himself an easy and conspicuous mark for the enemy, according to Southey, etc., and proved his assertion thus—Lord Seaford and Mr. F.'s Father were joint members for the Boro' of Seaford and Sir Thos. Hardy, Captain of the *Victory* at Trafalgar, used to stay with Lord S. and one day when dining with Lord S. at Mr. F.'s Father's he said that Nelson only wore a plain blue coat with a star or order sewed in coloured cloth on the breast, but it was true that Nelson said almost at the last "Kiss me, Hardy."—This, I trust, disposes of the wish of those who hold it was 'Kismet, Hardy,' that Nelson said.

'January 8th, 1868. My birthday—33 years old. Thank God! Emma being out, I went to sup with Mr. FitzGerald.' Whether the pious ejaculation refers to the grace

of Mr. Spalding's survival to be thirty-three, or to Mrs. Spalding's absence, we cannot be sure ; but we know that FitzGerald liked Mrs. Spalding. Among the unpublished letters are two to her, in one of which the old bachelor proves his thoughtfulness and kindness by saying : ' I send you a very homely, but I hope not the more useless, Present : Calico and Flannel, of which I have heard it is good to have a little Store in a House. Such as it is, pray take it with the Good will I offer it with.' And in the other, ' I was about to send you a black silk Dress, such as I sent to my friend Miss Crabbe a year ago : having been told that such a Dress is about as useful a present as one can make in that way. But it has struck me that you may already have one such : or somewhat that serves the purpose as well : and that you might prefer something of Boys or Girls apparel—Serge, or Tweed, in place of it. Now, as I *had* bespoken the dress, you need feel no delicacy about choosing anything else you may please : and I beg you so to do.' I find also this very characteristic sentence in a letter to Mr. Spalding : ' But *make* Mrs. S. come, in spite of washing, Children and *General Obstinacy*.'

' *January 21st, 1868.* Mr. F. says it is worth learning French to read Montaigne, Spanish to read *Don Quixote* and Greek to read Sophocles.

' He told me when passing the Weeping Willow in the Alexanders' Garden and overhanging New Street that his Sister Mrs. *Vignati* gave it as a sprig to Lucy Barton, who raised it, and that it is either a sprig from one of those on Napoleon's grave at St. Helena, or a slip from a sprig taken thence.

' *February 23rd, 1868.* Mr. FG. " Old Lord Kensington told my Father that he had once spoken to an old Soldier who was at Chas. the First's execution."

'*March 8th*, 1868. That he once saw Moore—he went with Stephen Spring Rice to see Sam'l Rogers' Pictures, and on going in at the door a little man came tripping down the stairs, and out at the door, Rogers saying "There goes Moore—like a gay Butterfly, just alighting on me for a moment, then flying away to somebody else."—Stephen Spring Rice, of the Board of Customs, was one of FitzGerald's favourite friends: 'What a loyal kind heart it is,' he says in a letter to the Master of Trinity.

'*March 17th*, 1868. Mr. FitzGerald gave me the Bond for £500 he lent me on going into Business—and then burnt it—asking me to write to my Father and Mr. Cadge to tell them they were no longer liable for this amount on my account—Thank God for giving me such a friend—He has been all kindness and thought to and for me since the first day I knew him—why, I don't know, and I have *loved him*. I should if he had never given me a penny.' To this entry I may append, a little out of its place, the following: '*April 18th*, 1868. To sup with Mr. FitzGerald alone—had Scotch ale and oysters. He said it would not be worth my taking him the interest (of the £500 principal he gave me); that £7. 10. half yearly made no difference to him, but might in my little Business and with my children; besides if he ever should *need* it, why then, I would give it to him.

'*March 31st*, 1868. Having spent March 31st of last year (1867) at Lowestoft with Mr. FitzGerald and with "Posh" Fletcher, drank his health from a bottle of Clarke's old, good Port from the "Suffolk," I went at night again to wish him, as he once said, as many Birthdays as will be good for him.'—On this birthday FitzGerald was fifty-nine.

The same entry: 'I like my evenings with Mr. FG. *alone*. I learn more, enjoy more. I am getting selfish about him, I expect. I like him to *myself* best. I feel so at home

with him, could ask him anything, could tell him anything. Yet wonder how I have got to that—wonder more how he can put up with me (so inferior in every respect to him), still more how he could make a Friend of me. It took *me* some time to feel *perfectly* easy with him, but I have loved and respected him all along—not for what he has done for me but for himself—and love *and* respect *must* make friends—fast friends—between either sex.’

The following entry needs a little annotation. According to Spalding, FitzGerald once recited to him the following lines of Prior, stating that they were unpublished :

‘*Conscience is a well bred horse,  
He’ll stumble if you check his course,  
But ride him with an easy rein  
And rub him down with worldly gain,  
He’ll carry you through thick and thin,  
Safe, though dirty, to your inn.*’

The actual words, however, of the first lines are :

‘*For conscience, like a fiery horse,  
Will stumble if you check his course,*’

and the speaker is supposed to be the Vicar of Bray. The whole poem, ‘Dialogues of the Dead,’ seems still to be unpublished ; but the passage repeated by FitzGerald is now in the Aldine edition. I wonder where he then found it.

Before we come to the next entry, I ought to say that, from chivalrous motives, FitzGerald had married, in 1856, Lucy Barton, the daughter of Bernard Barton, by whom he was left executor. The marriage, doomed to frustration, lasted only six months, when they decided to separate, but, as FitzGerald had wished, the financial side of it was assured. ‘*May 4th, Monday, 1868.* Capt. William Brown on hearing of it [the marriage] said “ My dr. Fitz, I would have kicked



you to the Land's End rather than this should have happened." He does not in the least excuse himself—but says he acted very wrongly, and for the worst, in not bearing and forbearing after carrying out his engagement and contract ; speaks most highly of her, excuses her of any *design* in the matter, of her willingness to undergo anything, in the way of *self*, or great things, for him ; but great People [at Hudson Gurney's], great sights, great praise, great anticipations, and great confidence in her own power and management, spoiled her.

'May 23rd, 1868. The best singer Mr. FG. remembers was *Catalani* whom he used to hear at the Opera when young—and he spoke of how enthusiastically the sailors cheered her when she went on board a Man of War at Plymouth, when, before leaving, she sang "Rule Britannia" on the Deck.'—It is odd to recall that a version of this incident was recently employed, with great effect, in a Hollywood film.

'September 10th, 1868. Walked through my garden and along the River Wall with Mr. FG. and Revd. Wm. Airy. Mr. A. asked me if I had seen in the day's paper who was the winner of the St. Leger. Mr. FG. said to him "You are a pretty *elderly* Divine to be so interested in Turf transactions."

We come next to a letter from FitzGerald to Spalding dated from Lowestoft, September 4th, 1869, asking for assistance. 'Well—winter will soon be here and no more Suffolk bowling greens. Once more I want you to help in finding me a lad, or boy, or lout, who will help me to get through the long winter nights—whether by cards or reading, now that my eyes are not so up to the mark as they were. I think they are a little better : which I attribute to the wearing of these hideous goggles, which keep out Sun,

Sea, Sand, &c. But I must not, if I could, tax them as I have done over books by lamplight till midnight. Do pray consider this for me and look about. I thought of a sharp lad—the son of Hayward the Broker—if he could read a little decently he would do. Really one has lived quite long enough.’ Who the new reader was, I cannot say, but I once knew, as I have described elsewhere, a riding-master in London who, as a boy at Woodbridge, had read Dickens to FitzGerald, but did not find him too easy an audience. Whoever the 1869 reader may have been, he did not last very long, for in the *Letters*, on February 22nd, 1872, we find this passage to Miss Anna Biddell: ‘I have lost the Boy who read to me so long and so profitably; and now have another; a much better Scholar, but not half so agreeable or amusing a Reader as his Predecessor. We go through Tichborne without missing a syllable, and, when Tichborne is not long enough, we take to *Lothair*, which has entertained me well.’

The Diary again. ‘October 23rd, 1869. Went to dinner at Gt. Bealings Rectory, and drove to Ipswich afterwards curiosity hunting. I only bought a nursery sketch by old Goodwin for 10/- which Mr. FitzGerald wished for, it being a back view of part of Bredfield House containing window of his bedroom when a boy.’

From a letter from Lowestoft dated September 8th, 1870: ‘*Thursday*. I had your letter last night; so I see that my last duly reached you. Thank you for yours. I want you to take some more trouble for me. *More Books*, viz. 4 *small Vols. of Montaigne* in the top shelf between the windows of my room at Mr. Berry’s, and a volume (bound or not, I forget) of miscellaneous *Essays* somewhere in one of the shelves by the windows in the adjoining room. The Vol. contains some Papers by *Spedding* and some on *English*

*Hexameter Translations of Homer.*'—James Spedding was the editor of Bacon and FitzGerald's Cambridge friend, about whose high bald head he used to be so funny.

'April 6th, 1871. Heard from Mr. FG. He gave my Wife a new dress for Summer, which I fetched from Mr. Berry's and it gives good satisfaction.

'April 9th. Long walk with Posh and Mr. FG. Home to tea off Plover's eggs. Had a glass of grog at night with Posh.

'April 11th. To Ipswich and brought back the smaller portrait of Posh from Cades, for Mr. FitzGerald.

'April 14th, 1871. Mr. FitzGerald came back from Lowestoft and Mr. Aldis Wright, late Librarian and now Bursar of Trinity Coll. Cambridge, came for a visit. I met him at supper at night when we broached a bottle of the real old Trinity ale sent to Mr. FitzGerald by the Master of Trinity (Dr. Thompson).—Aldis Wright, who was to be the Editor of *FitzGerald's Letters and Literary Remains*, was then thirty-nine.

'March 23rd, 1872. Thackeray was at Cambridge (Trinity) one term with Mr. FitzGerald. He didn't stay long after and didn't take his degree. He used to sing "The Friar of Orders Grey." Tennyson did not sing but would personate Geo. IV well—turn up his collar, puff out his cheeks, etc. He would also well act the sun shining out and disappearing as behind a cloud—with his face, manner, and expression.

'April 28th, 1872. Mr. F. told me of two Irish tales in the book [probably by the Rev. W. Harness, the editor of Shakespeare]—one where the man had offended his Priest, who, on going to see him when ill, threatened to turn him into a mouse. On the Priest leaving, the poor man said to his Wife "I know it is all nonsense that his Riverence has been talking of doing, but still you may as well shut up the

cat." The other, when a woman had stolen her neighbour Mrs. Malooney's, Pig—and after Mrs. M.'s death the thief was taken ill and the Priest said "Now you are going to die, and what will you say at the great Court above when you see Mrs. Malooney and the Pig you stole?" "Will y'r Riverence be quite sure I'll see *the Pig*?" "Quite sure, they'll all be there against ye." "Then I'll say, 'Mrs. Malooney, Ma'am, I'm mighty glad to see ye here and to be able to return ye the Pig that I found and borrowed in y'r lifetime.'"

'May 19th, 1872. Whit Sunday. Met Sir F. Pollock at Mr. FitzGerald's—found them looking over a Book of Thackeray's scraps and drawings. After some good old Port Wine we walked about at the Chateau. Of Macaulay's History Sir F. P. said "The parts are very stupid *that are true.*"'<sup>1</sup>—This was Sir William Frederick Pollock, Queen's Remembrancer, who had been at Cambridge with FitzGerald and was now staying with him. Later, talking of Tennyson's place, he said that agents 'actually advertise places and houses as being within 1, 2, or 3 miles of the seat of the Poet Laureate. On Mr. FG. asking "What does old Alfred say to that?", Pollock replied, "He doesn't care so long as they keep out of his way and away from his place."

'When Judge Maule was on the Circuits and at Liverpool he had to condemn a prisoner to seven years' transportation. The man on leaving said "Good-bye, you may be in Hell before then." The Judge, being rather deaf, said to somebody sitting below him, "What did the Prisoner say?" "He said, asking your Lordship's pardon, that your Lordship

<sup>1</sup> The late Sir Frederick Pollock, when a copy of this entry was sent to him by Mr. Henderson, replied that his father could never have spoken in that way 'of [Macaulay] an eminent member of his own College.'

may be in Hell before that time." Judge Maule said quietly, " *Well, we shall see !* "

' Talking of Ely—Mr. FG. said it always felt to him a depressing, sleepy kind of Place, and Dean Merivale said " Yes, it is a place that wants good Port Wine—nobody could ever write a good book there."

' *December 24th, 1872.* E. FG. sent his usual 'Xmas brace of Pheasants to Brian Procter [Barry Cornwall] whom he used to go to see with Thackeray, now over 80 years old. Gave me the pencil sketch, by Thackeray, of his Friend Capt. Wm. Browne of Bedford.'—Procter, who would have endeared himself to FitzGerald by his memoir of Charles Lamb, lived on until 1874, when he was eighty-six.

' *November 20th, 1873.* To-night, at supper, speaking of *Hone's Every Day Book*, Mr. FitzGerald said " When a Lad, or rather more than a Lad, I sent some rather pretty verses to Hone, which were afterwards copied into the *Athenæum* of the time and ascribed to Charles Lamb. Lamb wrote to say he *did not write* them, he wished he had.'—The verses were those which begin :

' 'Tis a sad sight  
To see the year dying.'

' *November 23rd, 1874.* At night to a meat tea at Little Grange to meet Archdeacon Groome.'—This was the father of the author of *Two Suffolk Friends*, the first of those two friends being the Archdeacon himself.

' *November 29th, 1874.* Mr. FG. gave me a Pin bought in Edinboro' when he went to Abbotsford, " if I will wear it " !'

In a letter to Spalding, dated Woodbridge, December 23rd, 1876 : ' I do not think there is anything to be told of Woodbridge News : anyhow, I know of none : sometimes not

going into the street for days together. I have a new Reader—son of Fox & Binder—who is intelligent, enjoys something of what he reads, can laugh heartily, and does not mind being told not to read through his Nose : which I think is a common way in Woodbridge : perhaps in Suffolk.’

From another letter, dated ‘ Woodbridge, May 21st, 1877 : I don’t look into a newspaper since this Eastern business : nor wish to hear of it :—as it only worried me to no purpose.’ —Sixty-one years ago, and still it persists, this Eastern business, in some form or another, and still we are worried to no purpose !

And so we come to the end, to Spalding’s account of FitzGerald’s funeral at Boulge on June 19th, 1883—at Boulge, although twice in the Diary is expressed FitzGerald’s spoken wish to be buried at Geldeston, next his sister. ‘ Tuesday at 3 p.m. walked to Boulge Churchyard to be present at the Burial of my dear Friend and Master, Edward FitzGerald—a small gathering of his old and loved Friends were there to see him laid in an earth grave and a plain oak coffin, at the West end of the Church between the Mausoleum, built by his brother John Purcell FitzGerald, and a spreading Yew tree. Many birds were singing in the Park Trees and everything was quiet, orderly, and solemn just as He would have wished it. . . . At the service and grave were Walter and Edmund Kerrich, Rev. G. Crabbe, Revd. E. Doughty (the three last his Executors), Archdeacon Groome, Mowbray Donne, Professor Edward Cowell, Aldis Wright, Capt. Brooke, Alfred Smith, Col. and Mr. Barlow, Herman Biddell, Dr. Jones, Geo. Moore, W. Arnott, F. Whisstock, etc., and two or three old Farmers who knew and respected him when he lived several years ago at Boulge Cottage close by the Park. . . .

‘ John Loder first introduced me to Mr. FitzGerald, I think

in 1861, one Sunday afternoon in the Elm Avenue by the Rope Walk at Woodbridge soon after I was made Secretary to my old Corps the 3rd Suffolk, and I have since known him very intimately, and had a love for him next to that for my Father. He was the most learned and clever man I ever met—knew seven languages— . . . [here follows a list of his College and later friends] yet was retiring, simple, hospitable, tender, charitable, and loving to those he cared to know.'

Spalding, I may add, became a Corporal in the Wilford or 3rd Suffolk Rifle Volunteers in 1860 and later a Lieutenant. He held his post as Curator of the Colchester Museum from 1885 until his resignation in 1892. One, at any rate, of his correspondents there was FitzGerald's friend, Charles Keene the artist. Spalding died at Colchester in 1902.

## *HUNGRY COYOTE.*

BY RODNEY GALLOP.

MOST Englishmen, if asked to name three distinguished men of pre-Spanish Mexico, would no doubt think first of Montezuma. Next they might recall the luckless Cuauhtemoc who carried on the struggle against the Spaniards after his death. Then, unless they came fresh from their Prescott, they would probably be at a loss for a third name. Nevertheless, in the century before the Conquest, Mexico produced one who may be accounted the greatest figure in the history of Indian America—Netzahualcoyotl, 'Hungry Coyote,' King of Texcoco.

It is too often forgotten that the Aztecs were comparative new-comers to the Valley of Mexico and that on the arrival of the Spaniards their great lake-city of Tenochtitlan had only recently achieved its supremacy by a skilful policy of wars and alliances. Before the Aztec civilisation of Tenochtitlan the eternal snows of the great volcanoes had looked down upon the Toltec civilisation of Tula and the Acolhuan civilisation of Texcoco, this last built on the eastern shores of that lake where the Aztecs found their island home.

With the break-up of the Toltec Empire, the splendours of which may well have surpassed even those which so dazzled Cortes and his men, the Toltec clans moved southwards under the pressure of the Chichimecs, hunting tribes from the North who founded the Acolhuan dynasty in the twelfth century under King Xolotl. Dynasty and civilisa-



tion alike attained their apogee during the reign of Netzahualcoyotl, whose life-span covered the greater part of the fifteenth century.

'Hungry Coyote' (the name is derived from that of a religious fetish made of the skin of a coyote or prairie-dog) came to the throne of his fathers at a time of great stress and tribulation. The peace-loving kingdom of the Acolhuan was menaced by an upstart princeling called Tezozomocs, of Atzcapotzalco, who in about 1418 revolted against Hungry Coyote's father, King Ixtlilxochitl, 'Vanilla Face,' and murdered him before the eyes of his son who lay concealed in the branches of a tree.

'This prince,' writes the chronicler Clavijero of Vanilla Face, 'was endowed with great wit and with incomparable magnanimity and was more worthy than any other to occupy the throne of Acolhuacan. . . . If the cause of these disasters be investigated it will be found to be no other than the ambition of a prince. Would to God that the evil fruits of passion were less frequent and less violent ! When no limit is set to those of a monarch or of a minister, they are enough to inundate the fields with human blood, to ruin cities, to destroy states and to upset the whole world.'

As a crowning indignity Tezozomoc gave Texcoco in fief to the Aztec King Quimalpopoca, and moved his capital to his own stronghold of Atzcapotzalco. Hungry Coyote was himself present in disguise at the ceremonies and was, with difficulty, dissuaded by his partisans from committing some rash act.

Thenceforward for many years he was a fugitive, never safe from the tyrant, yet never willing to depart far from his beloved Texcoco. He suffered the adventures and vicissitudes of a Bonnie Prince Charlie. On one occasion he was saved by a loyal retainer who took his place and paid

for his devotion with his life. On another occasion he was hidden by a girl beneath the sheathes of the green *chia* herb which she was reaping, while she coolly sent his pursuers off on a false trail. Yet again, he was nearly caught in the weavers' village of Cuautitlan and, until the coast was clear, lay concealed beneath a pile of aloe leaves used for making fibre.

Gradually, however, the situation changed. People began to murmur at Tezozomoc's cruelty and extortion. The tyrant himself was visited by strange and disturbing dreams in which Netzahualcoyotl in the form of an eagle was pecking out his heart and in the form of a lion was licking his body and sucking his blood. Summoning his three sons, he bade them find Hungry Coyote and slay him. Only a year later, in about 1422, he died, having named as his heir his son Tayatzin.

There then ensued one of those strange sequences of apparently motiveless actions so characteristic of ancient Aztec chronicle and legend, and so disconcerting to the historian imbued with a sense of consistency. Netzahualcoyotl attended the funeral of his father's murderer and his own sworn enemy and saluted those present with ceremonial gifts of flowers. He was allowed to go free. Meanwhile, Maxtlaton, Tayatzin's brother, and a far stronger character, assumed charge of public affairs. A conflict between them was inevitable. Tayatzin, it is said, schemed to kill Maxtlaton, but the latter got his blow in first at a banquet in the best Cinquecento style.

There now followed a split with Tenochtitlan. Maxtlaton offended Quimalpopoca by sending him (Heaven knows why) a present of a woman's dress and by ravishing one of his concubines. The dishonoured Aztec attempted to commit ritual suicide, but even this melancholy consolation was

denied him by Maxtlaton, who took him prisoner. He was, however, finally successful in hanging himself.

These odd events not unnaturally increased the discontent already bred by Maxtlaton's tyranny, and Netzahualcoyotl's hour was about to strike. Collecting big forces of partisans in the country round the volcanoes his first coup was the recapture of Texcoco, which he followed up with an alliance with Tenochtitlan. Itzcoatl had succeeded Quimalpopoca as King of the Aztecs, and his nephew Montezuma Ilhuicamina, who was to succeed him eleven years later, went on an embassy to Maxtlaton. Obtaining no satisfaction, he challenged him according to time-honoured Indian ritual. That is to say, he presented him with arms of a defensive character, anointed his head and crowned him with the plume headdress traditionally placed on the heads of the dead. The idea underlying this ceremony was presumably that the challenger regarded his foe as already among the departed. In this instance, at least, the notion was justified, for it was to Montezuma that the honour fell on the following day of killing Maxtlaton, scattering his army and making himself master of Atzcapotzalco. All this happened in the year 1425.

In the following year, 1426, Netzahualcoyotl was solemnly crowned King of the Acolhuans and Tepanecs. His youthful adventures and adversities were over, and from now onwards the qualities which he was to display were those which made Texcoco for half a century the Athens of Mexico and the King himself its Pericles and its Solon. Twentieth-century Europe has much to learn from this fifteenth-century Amerind who tempered justice with mercy and made the sword the servant, not the master, of the ploughshare and the pen.

His first measure was an amnesty extended even to those

who had been his worst enemies, for it was his conviction that 'a monarch might punish, but revenge was unworthy of him.' The organisation of a judicial system followed, and his laws were of such severity as to earn him from Prescott the title of 'the Draco rather than the Solon of Anahuac.' In respect for property he saw the foundation of all good government, and the theft of no more than four corncocks was enough to earn condign punishment. Another provision which strikes strangely upon modern ears was the death sentence for the heinous offence of falsifying historical truth. Nevertheless, his laws, however harsh, were administered with scrupulous justice. Judges were rewarded on a princely scale in order that they might be freed from the temptation of accepting bribes. Civil courts were kept distinct from criminal. No trial or lawsuit might last longer than four months. At the end of this period it was settled out of hand by an irrevocable decision of the King's Council.

Like other monarchs of history and fable, Hungry Coyote used to go about among his subjects in disguise and thus acquaint himself at first hand with the conditions in which they lived. On one occasion it is related that he heard a woodman who had brought a load of faggots to sell in the market square complaining that his lot was so hard, while the ruler of the people led a life of ease and luxury. Netzahualcoyotl had his own way of dealing with this sort of thing. He summoned the now-trembling woodman to his audience chamber and explained to him how much heavier a burden were the cares of state than a bundle of faggots. Then, making the man a present of cloth and cocoa-beans, he dismissed him, saying : 'Go : with the little you have you will now be rich, while I, with all my wealth, shall always be poor.'

With the sense to realise that peace and orderly government were the only highroad to prosperity, Netzahualcoyotl gave every encouragement to commerce and industry. The wealth which came pouring into his coffers he expended on a great palace in Texcoco of which wonderful tales are told. Two hundred thousand men are said to have been employed in its building, and with its interminable halls and courtyards and council-chambers it measured some twelve hundred by nine hundred yards, a city in itself. 'These palaces,' wrote the chronicler, 'were of such admirable and marvellous construction, with such diversity of stones, that they did not appear to be the work of human artifice.'

More fascinating than all this pomp and splendour must have been the sylvan retreat which Hungry Coyote built for himself on the hill of Texcotzingo a few miles to the east of Texcoco on a low spur projecting from the Sierra Nevada. The site is an idyllic one, with the sun shining on the lake through ancient *ahuehuete* trees, overshadowed by the clouds gathered round Mount Tlaloc's crest. It must have been even more lovely when Netzahualcoyotl's aqueduct brought water from the hills, and shady trees grew on the steep slopes where all is now barren rock and maquis. In his terraced gardens Netzahualcoyotl cultivated countless flowers with sonorous Aztec names: *yoloxochitl*, 'flower of the heart'; *huitzitzixochitl*, 'humming-bird flower'; *tzompānchōchitl*, 'the yellow rose of the tombs'; *oceloxochitl*, 'tiger-flower'; and *nocochpilxochitl*, 'flower which hangs from the ear.' Birds of every kind sang and sported in the aviaries. Those which could not be kept alive were modelled with all the craft of jeweller and goldsmith. Deer, hares and rabbits ran wild. The entrance was guarded by a huge couchant lion, carved in porphyry, crowned with feathers

and gold-work and holding in its mouth a mask of the King. Out of the solid rock baths were hewn, filled with crystalline water which the bather entered by steps cut in the rock, and so brightly polished that they shone like mirrors.

Hungry Coyote saw not only to his own well-being. He left nothing undone to make life more pleasant and men more worthy of it. He put a stop to the wood-cutting which even then threatened to denude the slopes and destroy the fertility of Anahuac, and which, in Spanish times, completed this fell work. He even attempted to abolish human sacrifice, but finding this step to be too far in advance of his subjects' superstitions, he restored it, ordering, however, that no other victims should be sacrificed than prisoners of war.

To exalt men's minds above the common round Hungry Coyote created academies of poetry, music, history, painting and the art of divination. The Academy of Music, in particular, was the accepted arbiter of æsthetic taste. Against its canons none could offend with impunity. At its meetings poems were read and compositions played and sung, many of them by the King himself.

Texcoco's lore, its historical archives, paintings and literary manuscripts did not survive the fate which the Conquistadores saw fit to mete out to every manifestation of an alien, pagan culture. Many of them, no doubt, were destroyed in Archbishop Zumarraga's great bonfire which literally reduced a civilisation to cinders. Nevertheless, a handful of Netzahualcoyotl's poems, piously collected from the oral tradition soon after the Conquest by his descendant Fernando de Alba Ixtlilxochitl, survive, not in the original Aztec, but in the chronicler's Spanish translation. They reveal the King as a sensitive nature obsessed with the beauty and the mutability of all worldly things.

*'The fairest rose that blooms to-day  
To-morrow may be dying.'*

That is the burthen of Netzahualcoyotl's poems alternating with the 'vanity of vanities' and the graver note of Ecclesiasticus.

'How melancholy a thing it is,' he wrote in a poem about the tyrant Tezozomoc, 'to consider the prosperity attained by that monarch who, full of greed and ambition, grew tall like the willow, and tyrannized the humble and the weak. Meadows and flowers Spring offered unto him while he could still take pleasure in them. Then at last, rotten and dry, the hurricane of death swept by and tore him up by the roots, so that he fell to the ground in pieces. . . . Wherefore take pleasure now in the beauty and abundance of the verdant summer with the song of twittering birds. Let butterflies suck honey from the fragrant flowers. . . . All things mortal are like nosegays which are passed from hand to hand until they fade and die. . . .'

Again, after passing in review the glories of his ancestral dynasty, he exclaims :

'Oh that those who to-day are linked to us by the chains of love in the treasure-house of friendship might never see the sharply severing file of death ! For there is no good thing so sure that the future will not change it.'

The poem of which this is the concluding verse may have been inspired by his Queen, a Princess of Tacuba, whom he wedded in 1436, and who bore him the heir, Nezahualpilli, who succeeded him on his death in 1470. It was probably the pomp and splendour of his wedding which prompted the most memorable of his poems, in which, once more, the willow serves him as a symbol :

'The vanities of this world are like the green willow-tree. However much it may aspire to eternity, an unex-

pected fire will consume it at the last, a sharp axe will fell it, a blizzard will bring it to the ground, or old age and decrepitude will make it weak and sorrowful. The scarlet robes of kingship are like the colours of the rose which last but a day while the sap yet rises in the heart of the blossom. The gentlest ray of Tonatiuh the Sun is enough to make them fade and wither. Brief is the reign of flowers. Those which at dawn proudly display their power and glory bewail at dusk their lost splendour, their faces inclined towards insensience and decay, towards death and the tomb.

‘All worldly things have their appointed term and at the very height of their joyous career, in all their vanity and splendour, their strength fails and they perish and are engulfed. The whole round earth is nought but a sepulchre. Nothing it nourishes but shall be hidden and entombed within it. Rivers and streams, springs and fountains flow unceasingly, but none return to their sparkling source. They hasten feverishly to the vast dominions of Tlaloc. The deeper they flow in their courses, the more deeply do they hollow out the funeral urns of their interment. That which was yesterday is to-day no more, nor shall the things of to-day exist to-morrow.

‘The vaults are full of pestilential dust which was once the living bones, the flesh and blood of men who sat on thrones and daises, presided over councils, led armies, conquered provinces, possessed treasures and flattered themselves with majesty and splendour, with fortune, power and admiration. Such glories pass like the awful vapours which rise from the gaping jaws of Popocatepetl. No memorial do they leave of their existence but the rough parchments of their chronicles. . . .’

The vanity of power, the transitoriness of all beauty inevitably turned the poet's thoughts to eternity and infinity, and in one of his poems he writes :

‘And I said : In truth there is no good place here on earth : in truth elsewhere is happiness. What end does



this world serve? Verily, there is another life beyond. Oh, that I might go thither! There the birds sing. There I may learn to know the good flowers, the sweet flowers, those which alone bring the intoxication of peace and forgetfulness.'

Such thoughts led Netzahualcoyotl to the conviction that there must be a Supreme Being, the sole creator of all things.

'The gods which I adore,' Fernando makes him exclaim, 'are truly idols of stone which can neither speak nor feel. They cannot have made the beauty of the sky; the sun, the moon and the stars which embellish it and give light to the world; the rivers, streams and springs, the trees and plants which grace the earth, the men who possess it, and all things created. Some God, most powerful, hidden and unknown, is the creator of the universe. Only he can console me in my affliction and succour me in the great anguish which I feel in my heart.'

To this Unknown God, whom he called *Tloque in Nahuaque*, the Being of all Things, he built a pyramid, crowned by a tower nine stories high, its topmost vault painted black and incrusting with golden stars to represent the firmament. No image of wood or stone was suffered to be worshipped therein. No blood sacrifice was offered to this unknown, invisible god, only flowers and copal incense. At stated times a gong or drum summoned the worshippers to prayer.

'Like the awful vapours which rise from the gaping jaws of Popocatepetl' the splendours of Netzahualcoyotl's empire have vanished, almost without trace. The Conquerors built the Cathedral and churches of Texcoco on the site of his temples and took the stones of his palaces for their dwellings.

Nature has been no kinder to Texcotzingo than man to Texcoco. More than once I have found my way there at

the end of the rains when a profusion of wild flowers blow where once Hungry Coyote walked in his gardens. On the lower slopes are the rose-gardens, the *tejocote* orchards and the *maguey* aloe fields of an Indian village. The higher slopes are given over to rocks, among which bloom pink cosmos, yellow broom, scarlet penstimmon and *simonillo*, giant stone-crop and *venenillo* with its miniature white blossoms like hoarfrost on a window-pane. Nothing stirred, save a tiny salamander scuttering among the rocks, freezing into immobility when he sensed my presence.

Traces of Netzahualcoyotl's pleasure still peer through the rocks and bushes : carved rocks and a flat terrace at the top of the hill, an oratory hewn deep into the hillside where the ruined aqueduct spans the neck of the promontory, a conduit girdling the hill and feeding the famous baths. I had imagined these baths to be spacious reservoirs in which Hungry Coyote and his courtiers and concubines swam and sported. They proved sadly disillusioning. Carved out of the solid rock, like the steps which lead down to them, they are mean and cramped. One indeed is no longer than a hip-bath ; the other, presided over by a weather-beaten stone frog, would scarcely allow the bather to lie full length.

Horrid doubts rose to my mind. Was this the scale of Netzahualcoyotl's vaunted grandeur ? Had his palaces been more than mean huts of sun-baked adobe, magnified out of all proportion by the imagination of his descendants ? Then I remembered the giant statue of the god Tlaloc, lying on its back near Coatlinchan a few miles away ; the massive walls of near-by Huexotla ; and old travellers' tales of vast cedar beams and lintel stones found among the ruins. Netzahualcoyotl's glory lived indeed and must not be measured to-day by a handful of ' pestilential dust.'

*Mexico City.*

*BRANDY FOR THE BEES.*

BY D. WILSON MACARTHUR.

HAROLD ANSTRUTHER had an adventure.

It was not, perhaps, what other people would have called an adventure ; but to Harold, very definitely an adventure.

It had all the ingredients—a beautiful young woman with a foreign accent, a glass of brandy, lunch for two . . . oh, yes, very much an adventure, for Harold.

Harold lived very quietly in the country. He was an amiable young man with no interest in anything but the country, and country things, and bees.

He was very clever with bees. He could do all sorts of things to them, and they appeared to like it. He wrote articles about bees. He was always writing a book about bees. It was a beautiful book, full of delightful fantasy and unusual ideas and felicitous turns of phrase, and he would rewrite a chapter a dozen times on the off-chance of improving merely a word here and there, or injecting some new whimsicality, or developing some new angle.

He loved his book, and no doubt he would be very, very sorry when it was finished, and he was robbed of his greatest pleasure in life, which was writing and rewriting the book.

He never worried very much about money.

Certainly, he had very little. Just enough to keep a few rooms in daily use, and pay the wages of his gardener and the gardener's wife, who ambled up from the lodge and made his breakfast, and flicked a duster here and there, and made his lunch, and washed the dishes, and made his dinner,

and went back home feeling that she had performed miracles of housecraft and that young Mr. Harold ought to be that grateful, the way she looked after him so well.

Young Mr. Harold was grateful, in a passive sort of way, because it seemed to him that Mrs. Plumridge really did wonders, and he was perfectly content to inhabit the gun-room, where he kept his guns, his fishing-rods, his farm catalogues, and his books, and his bedroom downstairs, where he kept his scanty wardrobe and was apt, if not watched, to keep his muddy Wellingtons and the riding-boots that Mrs. Plumridge cleaned and polished once a week when he went out riding on a borrowed mare.

Life, like this, could be very pleasant. It did not occur to young Mr. Harold that he was leading a very narrow, sequestered, and lonely life. He was perfectly happy—or almost perfectly happy. He had only one nagging little worry.

This was purely on account of the bees.

He was not at all distressed that the greater part of Rickley House was shut up, its furniture draped in melancholy dust-covers, its rooms seldom entered except when Mrs. Plumridge carried out what she called spring cleaning, and which consisted of opening up all the rooms, opening up all the windows, looking askance at all the dust-covers, and brushing accumulated dust off the top landing into the shaft of the broad staircase, and off the various steps, and finally sweeping what little reached the ground floor out through the front door, down the steps, and on to the drive.

He was not at all distressed that the twenty-one acres that still remained to Rickley House should produce only enough vegetables to supply the wants of three people, or that a neighbour's sheep grazed in the magnificent park, or that daisies rioted over the once lovely lawns.

True, he knew perfectly well how such grounds should be kept ; but he was by nature philosophical in such matters, and since he had been left the House without the funds to support it properly he could do no better for it than he did.

He only dimly resented his Aunt Sara.

He had never met his Aunt Sara.

It was like her, he thought, to drop out the final h. She was that sort of woman. She must be. His uncle, now deceased, had lived for some years abroad, and had married abroad, in the very last year of his life, and no doubt only some sort of family compunction still lingering in a mind befuddled by unwonted sunshine and far too cheap cognac had impelled him to leave even the House to his almost forgotten nephew.

The House, as such places go, was not large, and Harold's inheritance included only a small amount of invested capital and one farm of a hundred and eighty acres, in addition to the House and grounds.

The House, all the same, was definitely a mansion. It had an air ; and Harold, who had always been passionately attached to a country life, had by this time learned all about living on air ; so the five hundred pounds per annum that he had to hand over to his Aunt Sara, by the terms of his uncle's will, did not at first distress him.

It distressed him only because of the bees.

He had an idea that he could make his bees infinitely happier if only he could spend a little more money on them ; also he passionately wanted to get hold of some really excellent artist to paint a few portraits before it was too late. To the eye of ignorance, all queen bees are alike ; they are merely queen bees. To the eye of Harold Anstruther, each was easily distinguishable from all the others, and had you collected all the queen bees in England and put them into

a long, long row of small glass cases Harold could have walked along and unerringly picked out his own.

However, with the meagre pittance left after paying Aunt Sara her five hundred pounds each year, further expenditure was impossible, for Harold did not have the City mind. He could not make a profit on his bees. It seemed to him perfectly logical that if his bees earned a profit they were perfectly entitled to claim a dividend, and it was equally logical that the dividend should represent the total gross profit, without deduction for any labour he himself had expended.

Of course he won prizes with his honey. He also had to answer a considerable volume of correspondence directed at him because of his acknowledged importance among the bee-keeping fraternity.

He celebrated his victories modestly, as he had celebrated his sudden inheritance.

His uncle had quitted the shores of England in ignorance of an astonishing calamity, an oversight totally out of character. He had left, in the vast cobwebbed cellar of Rickley House, one solitary bottle of brandy that, overlarded by layers of dust, had escaped his roving eagle eye. It was such brandy as seldom falls to the lot of nephews who inherit country mansions from crapulous uncles. Harold had never, in all his life, tasted anything quite like it.

Mrs. Plumridge had served him dinner on the day of his installation. Roast chicken—one of her own chickens. And bread sauce. And potato crisps. And potatoes out of her own garden. But she had been apologetic.

‘Bain’t nothink for to drink, Mr. Harold,’ she had said. ‘Unless maybe I could send Plumridge there to the pub for a drop o’ bitter, or brown ale?’

‘Anything you like, Mrs. Plumridge,’ Harold had said, and the gardener’s wife had recalled something.

‘Of course, there’s a *cellar*, Mr. Harold. But your uncle, now, he wouldn’t have left nothink *there*.’

Harold, out of curiosity, left the chicken for a moment and explored. Hence the brandy.

‘But you’ll have to get me some ale, too,’ he said, returning in triumph. ‘I can’t drink this with chicken, can I?’

‘Your uncle could drink that with anythink,’ Mrs. Plumridge informed him, but ambled off to send her husband to the pub.

So Harold, having eaten his fill of chicken, and rhubarb tart, and biscuits and cheese—Mrs. Plumridge did not, be it noted, ever repeat this preliminary effort—treated himself to a glass of brandy, and even offered one to Mrs. Plumridge. She did not refuse. But she never got another.

At the first sip, Harold realised the true marvel of his discovery, and although Harold was the very reverse of being mean, he had a conscience, and he knew that it would be wicked, criminal, in fact, to allow nectar of this vintage to course unappreciated over the vitiated palate of a gardener’s wife.

He brought it out, thereafter, only on state occasions. He kept it in a cupboard, securely locked away; and with it he celebrated the victories of his bees; until there remained only a very little left, and he reached the conclusion that since the happiest day in the lives of his bees would be the day on which Aunt Sara died, and the bees thus came into a legacy of five hundred pounds per annum, he should keep what was left against the special celebrations of that day.

He knew nothing at all about his Aunt Sara. He had never met her, and they had never corresponded, beyond

one letter each, formal and tentative. Harold had written to express his regret at his uncle's sudden death, and to offer any assistance he could render ; Aunt Sara had written to thank him, and to point out that on such a meagre annuity she could not possibly afford the railway fare to England, and so she would stay where she was, and her lawyer could handle everything for her.

Thus affairs stood, when Harold had his adventure.

It was a glorious summer day, when the bees were particularly happy, and inclined to be just a little lazy, a fact which Harold had noted with indulgence. The garden—such of it as he and Plumridge together had managed to preserve—was a riot of colour and scent, and the vista of the park, kept closely cropped by his neighbour's sheep, was green and pleasant to the eyes.

Suddenly from the distant main road came the low hum of a car, and Harold, lounging in a hammock chair immersed in thought over a phrase in chapter nine of his book, and irritated slightly by the recollection that after lunch he must go, by 'bus, to the railway station at Chepping Siltcombe to collect some new bees, was brought to his feet in astonishment as the hum drew nearer, and the scrunch of tyres on gravel announced a car's approach up the long winding drive.

It came into sight, wavered a little, and then, performing a wide sweep, halted at the front steps.

It was a small car, by no means new, but good all the same, a car that had cost its first owner quite a sum of money, a car that was capable of considerable speed.

It held only one occupant at the moment, and Harold, walking somewhat unsteadily towards it—unsteadily, because his hat had fallen off and the sun had made him a trifle dizzy, lying in his chair immersed in thought—was still more



astonished to behold a vision emerge and advance a tentative step or two, with the beginning of a smile on her lips.

Very red lips, Harold noticed. He also noticed that the vision was lovely, and seemed young, and was exquisitely dressed. His standard of comparison—Mrs. Plumridge—was admittedly not exacting ; but all the same, something informed his ignorance that here were clothes that had a genuine air, and here, as a corollary, a young woman with a genuine air.

She smiled more openly as he approached, and spoke.

‘Mr. Anstruther?’ It sounded very nearly Anstroother. Like that, it acquired a distinction. Harold had his first pleasant surprise.

He had others, in a rapid series.

‘You are the owner—no?’

Harold admitted the impeachment.

‘So delightful! So peaceful! Ah, this English countryside!’

She turned half-away from him, so that he could inspect the perfection of her profile, and she gazed with warm eyes of admiration upon the English countryside. Then she turned back and gazed upon Harold.

Her eyes were equally warm, and admiring.

‘How lucky you are!’ she whispered. ‘How lucky!’ And Harold told himself he really was, but not for the reason she meant.

‘I hope I am forgiven? I come, altogether a stranger, and I see this lovely place, and someone tells me it belongs to a Mr. Anstruther, and I—I come in. I cannot help myself. He is a very charming young gentleman, they tell me. He will be kind. He will not be annoyed. You are not annoyed, no?’

Harold, very much in the dark, professed his complete innocence of annoyance.

‘ And perhaps you will let me peep inside the house, no ? ’

Harold came to his senses. He leapt forward, with sudden realisation of the duties of a host, and assured his visitor that he would be ravished with delight to let her peep into the house. And so they went indoors.

She went all over the house. She lifted dust-sheets and peeped at furniture. She was very dainty, very full of admiration and envy that was flattering, and she gave little cries of delight.

It seemed that she was interested in furniture. She had been told that Rickley House was crammed with valuable old furniture, really beautiful things—and it was true ! She had seen for herself ! How excited she was !

Certainly, Harold knew that the house was full of furniture, which he never used, since it was kept hidden under dust-sheets ; but that the furniture could have any value—any realisable value, that is—would never have occurred to him. So he was quite flabbergasted when the lady asked if he would be willing to sell.

He was not—at the moment—for the simple reason that the idea was so extraordinarily novel. However, he was ready to reconsider. He was entirely charmed. He felt like saying : ‘ Dear lady ! If you like the furniture, take it—take it all ! I shall be delighted ! ’ He did not say that, however, and suddenly the lady stepped into a shaft of gold-spangled sunshine, and Harold discovered with something of a shock that the melting eyes were hard underneath, and that the very beautiful face was quite cold, and that he was being subjected to a searching scrutiny.

It disturbed him. But she stepped again very quickly out of the betraying beam into the shadows, and he thought he

must have been the victim of an hallucination, for she was at once melting, and sweet, and sympathetic again ; and her voice was honey-soft.

He began to get excited. After all, it is not every day that a hermit is visited by a fairy princess. By Jove, he *would* give her the furniture—or anyway, such pieces as she wanted ; and he began peeping under dust-sheets with her, full of curiosity to see what it was she admired so much. He only demanded of chairs that they should be comfortable, of tables that they should be large, and of bureaux that their drawers should slide easily out and in, and lock properly.

Then quite suddenly the lady did something that really excited him.

They were back on the ground floor. He was about to show her the huge, sepulchrally draped drawing-room, and had opened the door, when he discovered that she was not following. He looked round. She was standing clutching the door jamb, with one hand pressed to her eyes.

‘The sun,’ she whispered, with a weary gesture. ‘And the light, the changes—sunshine and shade—my poor head——’

Then she fainted.

Harold caught her, in time to prevent her falling, and carried her, very clumsily, into the gunroom, and laid her on the old horse-hair sofa with the antimacassar. Then he looked round for something to revive her.

He gave her a tiny nip of his precious brandy ; and she revived, with quite astonishing rapidity.

‘That is,’ were her first words, whispered in surprise, ‘very good brandy.’

But of course she had to rest a while, and it was after lunch-time, and naturally she was faint because she always

ate such a light breakfast, so she must stay to lunch with him.

Mrs. Plumridge did her best. The lady revived completely, and became quite gay. They chatted, over lunch. She listened to the saga of the bees and was very melting and encouraging about them. She made Harold feel that he was really the only bee-keeper in the world, and that bee-keeping was the only thing that mattered in the world, and that no woman could ever resist a man who kept bees.

She heard all about Aunt Sara, and agreed that it was a shame, and declared they must drink to the time when the bees would come into their inheritance ; and it seemed natural that they should drink that toast in the old brandy.

By the time they came to Mrs. Plumridge's apology for coffee, Harold was quite incapable of realising the crime of letting anyone but himself drink it ; and he scarcely noticed that the bottle was very soon almost empty.

His visitor grew gayer still. She became communicative, in her turn. She told Harold that she was really quite poor, that the car was borrowed, that she had to make some money quickly ; and then she had a wonderful idea. If Harold would only let her sell his surplus furniture for him, then she could take a commission, just a little commission, and she might actually get nearly a hundred pounds for it, and her commission would be whole five pounds ! She became very excited at the prospect.

Harold thought this a wonderful scheme ; only he was quite firm that she must take ten per cent commission, because with ninety pounds he could do a lot for his bees. He too became excited at the prospect.

They had to cement the bargain, and the lady reached for the brandy bottle and filled her glass once more.

She emptied her glass. Harold emptied the bottle into

it. She emptied the glass again ; and after that she kissed Harold.

It seemed the logical thing to do.

This thrilled Harold. By now, he knew that he was in love. Never had he seen anyone so wonderful, so beautiful, so gay and charming and so clever. He had drunk very little brandy ; but it was very old brandy, and mellow. But it was the lady that went to his head.

He decided that they ought to kiss again. They did. After a time he let out a shout.

‘ My bees ! ’

The lady looked astonished.

‘ My bees in Chepping Siltcombe,’ he explained, answering her enquiring eyebrows. ‘ Got to go and collect them.’

She smiled. She smiled very beautifully, Harold thought, and he knew that here was a woman who would be kind to bees.

‘ My car,’ she said. ‘ I’ll drive you to Chepping Siltcombe. We’ll go in my car. Your bees shall ride in my car, not in a ’bus. And when I sell your furniture for you, and get a lot of money, perhaps they’ll never have to ride in a ’bus again.’

Harold thought that was a beautiful idea. He was more in love than ever.

So they went outside—queer how the sunlight sparkled, how a golden haze lay upon the countryside, and the song of birds was golden-toned !—and they got into her car, and she swung it round and headed down the drive, and out on to the country road.

Of course she should have the furniture. When they got to Chepping Siltcombe he would have a man come out and pack it all, and the lady could take it away with her and sell it, and bring him his ninety pounds. A great big

van, perhaps two vans, and the lady in the little car leading the way—such a procession !

The car was astonishingly fast. The swift motion reacted on Harold. He began to recover his senses. He had not really taken much of the brandy. He was intoxicated not by the brandy but by his visitor and his adventure. His visitor, on the other hand, was intoxicated by the brandy and not by her host.

It took Harold a little while to realise that. Of course it was very old brandy, it might quite easily go to your head. Then perhaps she did not love him after all. Perhaps it was only the brandy. His adventure began to seem very queer indeed, and he felt slightly foolish.

He felt more foolish still when he observed that the lady was driving with a cold recklessness, a sort of heady defiance, as if to say : I know how to drive. I'll show you ! Just watch me !

If anyone attempted to pass her on the road, which was narrow and hedge-bordered and winding, she would wait until he had drawn level, then her foot would come down on the accelerator, and she would remain level, and the next corner would flash towards them, and the other fellow, hooting impatiently, would try to pass, and not quite manage it, and eventually have to brake hard and fall back in order to get round the corner safely ; and she would laugh.

She took corners at speeds that made the little car rock and sway and bounce and slither on to the crown of the road, sometimes even over to the far side ; and she did not care. She laughed.

Harold began to get frightened ; and he also became completely sober. His adventure began to seem a very ridiculous thing. He looked again at his companion's profile, and now he saw that she was not young really, that

she was only beautiful in a cold, hard, calculating way, and that her eyes were like agate, and completely selfish. She would not be kind to bees.

He saw that he had been a fool, and had come perilously near to being a still greater fool. He began to doubt her story, all of it, and the astonishing thought occurred to him that she had some secret design on him. He was no longer in love.

Then his mind became occupied by the fact that his life was in danger.

Ahead lay a cross-road, and as the hedges flashed past he saw a sign: SLOW—MAJOR ROAD AHEAD.

He looked at the hedges. Lovely hedges, growing out of high banks, growing thick and leafy and cool quite eight feet high. He looked at the speedometer. Seventy-one miles an hour. He heard, vaguely, the bleat of a horn.

He only saw the other car for a flashing moment, and then he felt himself in the air, and afterwards he was lying on something soft, which proved to be an ambulance bunk, and his head felt very sore. He sat up, and looked at the other bunk, and gasped, because it was entirely covered by a sheet. It looked like a dust-sheet. He had the ridiculous notion that if he lifted a corner and peeped under he might see a Queen Anne table, or a bureau, or something.

What followed was more or less nightmare. He remembered the police. He remembered being examined by doctors, and pronounced miraculously whole and sound. He hadn't even any bones broken, he hadn't even got concussion, he was perfectly all right. But the lady had been killed outright.

He told his story. He had no idea who she was. He did not even know her name. She had called, had asked

to see the house, and had fainted because of the sun. Then she had stayed to lunch, and, yes, she had drunk a little brandy.

No, he did not think she was drunk. (But privately he knew that she must have been drunk, although he hadn't noticed it at first.) He was very sorry. He wanted to go home to his bees.

The County police in Chepping Siltcombe knew him quite well. They knew all about him. They were very nice and friendly, and they saw him on to a 'bus for Little Cadger's End, from which he walked the few miles to Rickley House.

He never remembered much about that, or Mrs. Plumridge barraging him with questions. He remembered only looking at the empty brandy bottle and thinking he must have been mad, because now he couldn't celebrate when the bees came into their inheritance.

He went to bed. He got up, feeling all right again, for dinner. Then the telephone bell rang.

He recognised the name of Winterbotham, of Winterbotham, Winterbotham, and Springrove, his late uncle's solicitors, in London.

'I say, Anstruther!' The Winterbotham who was speaking sounded very excited and upset. 'What on earth happened?'

'How do you mean?' Harold replied, bewildered, because he never had anything to do with the Winterbothams and Springrove. 'Oh, the accident? How on earth did you hear about that?'

'How on earth——! Naturally we heard about it,' Winterbotham snapped. 'When did you meet her? When did she call? Where were you going?'

'You mean—oh, the lady!'



‘The lady!’ The lawyer exploded into the mouthpiece, and made Harold jump.

‘I suppose you know she’s dead?’

Yes, Harold knew that.

‘And from what they tell me, it’s a miracle you escaped without a scratch! But you must have been wandering, man! Why didn’t you tell the police who she was? They’re in a perfect stew about that now. You gave them no end of trouble, by not telling them——’

‘How on earth could I tell them?’ Harold asked. That seemed to stump Mr. Winterbotham. At any rate, he had no more to say until the telephone pipped thrice. Then he recovered.

‘My heavens,’ he said, in an exasperated voice. ‘Don’t you see? What did she want with you?’

‘My furniture, I think,’ Harold said. ‘She told me she could get nearly a hundred quid for it. It sounded good to me. She was to have five——’

‘A hundred! Good God, you’re a raving maniac! The stuff in Rickley House is worth a thousand—two thousand—every penny of it! You can thank your stars you did have that accident. Otherwise she’d have done you out of nearly two thousand pounds.’

‘Oh, I say!’ Harold bleated, distressed and shocked.

‘But why on earth you pretended not to know who she was,’ the lawyer went on, petulantly, and Harold interrupted.

‘What on earth are you talking about now?’ he demanded, his patience becoming exhausted.

‘I’m talking about your Aunt Sara, of course,’ Mr. Winterbotham snapped back, equally exhausted in his patience. ‘She arrived in England yesterday, penniless—entirely penniless. She came to me. She has always been a nuisance to us. I could not do anything. The fellow she

was living with in the south of France had quarrelled with her, and kicked her out, and she had spent all of her year's allowance, and wanted an advance. Of course everybody knows what *she* was ! No one but a drunken old—no one but your uncle would ever have *married* her. So she came back to England to see what she could pick up, and she said she would go and see you, and maybe you'd help her. Evidently she didn't tell you who she was until she could look around a bit. Perhaps she thought you'd be suspicious. She knew the furniture was valuable. The old fo—her husband had told her. But——'

'My God !' exclaimed Harold, thoroughly enlightened now. 'My Aunt Sara ! Then—the bees can celebrate after all. And that brandy——'

He held his breath a moment. Then : 'Gosh !' he exploded.

The solicitor rang off. He was not a patient man, and he hated enigmas. But Harold did not care. He was already shaking the bottle for its last few drops ; and his eyes, gazing upon the inverted label, were full of awe.

## THE LOST COLONY.

BY ROBERT E. BETTS.

### I.

LAST year the State of North Carolina held a summer-long celebration commemorating the 350th anniversary of the founding of the second English colony in North America. This colony is known in history as 'The Lost Colony,' for its fate never has been definitely known.

With the reign of Elizabeth, the Renaissance in England reached its full height. This intellectual rebirth stimulated every phase of the nation's life. There came with this movement, perhaps the major characteristic of it, an immense vitality and curiosity. Francis Bacon announced, with youthful audacity, that he had taken 'all knowledge' to be his domain. Men were restless; visions of new lands were seen. Sir Francis Drake, Sir Richard Grenville, John Hawkins, and others were busily engaged in scuttling Spanish ships on the high seas and sacking Spanish ports in the New World. Acquisition of gold and commodities of value became an obsession to the Elizabethan seamen as a means of quick wealth.

There was one Englishman, however, who had a different vision. He was Sir Humphrey Gilbert. In addition to seeking a north-west passage to the East, Gilbert wanted to form English colonies in the New World in order to expand the sphere of his country's influence. Spain had looked upon the New World as something to exploit rather than as a possible home for settlers from the Old World. Pursuing his vision, Gilbert and his half-brother, Walter

Raleigh, were more than justified, for on its trail was found the limitless wealth of a colonial empire.

With the rise of Raleigh at court in 1582, Gilbert had the means to make one last attempt to found a colony in the New World. In 1578 the Queen had granted him a patent for the purpose of founding a colony in America ; however, his ventures in this direction had not been successful. Accordingly, on June 11, 1583, a fleet of five ships sailed in quest of new land. Newfoundland was reached and annexed in the name of the Queen. Shortly thereafter, with a reduced fleet, Gilbert sailed southward in search of land in a more desirable climate. But luck continued to run against him, and in the autumn of that year he lost his life when his ship, the *Squirrel*, went down off the Azores.

At that time Spain was the predominant power in Europe. Her coffers overflowed with gold fresh from South America. Spain likewise was a Catholic country, England was Protestant, and relations between the two were rapidly nearing a break. Raleigh, a Protestant, viewed the coming conflict with Spain as one between Catholic and Protestant, King Philip against Queen Elizabeth. Moreover, he was well aware of the part Spanish ships had played in the failure of Gilbert to establish any colonies, and saw with clarity the need of a strong navy if the British were to be successful in a colonial enterprise. The year following Gilbert's death, his patent was renewed in Raleigh's name. One of the provisions set forth in the patent was that the colonists were to have the same privileges and rights as the inhabitants of the Mother Country.

Raleigh lost little time in sending out an expedition to seek a site for a settlement. The expedition was under the joint command of two English seamen, Captains Philip

Amadas and Arthur Barlow. It sailed April 27, 1584, with two ships. Simon Ferdinando, a native of Portugal, acted as pilot. The boats touched the North American coast on July 4. The island on which they landed lay between a long windswept barrier reef and a low luxuriantly wooded mainland. The island was about twelve miles long and two miles wide. It is now a part of North Carolina. In Barlow's reports of the voyage and discovery are seen the imaginative colourings of the age and its contagious enthusiasms. It was indeed a remarkable land 'so ful of grapes, as the very beating and surge of the sea overflowed them.'<sup>1</sup> There were great trees of every description in abundance. The fish, too, were there in wondrous forms and numbers. The Indians were a source of amazement to the English, and vice versa. An Englishman asked a native the name of the country, and the Indian, not knowing what was said, replied, 'Win-gan-da-coa,' that is, 'What fine clothes you wear!' The English thought this to be the name of the country. Members of the expedition were impressed with the fertility of the soil and thought the natives 'most gentle, loving, and faithful, void of all guile and treason, and such as live after the manner of the Golden Age.'<sup>2</sup>

Great joy was expressed in London over the success of Amadas and Barlow. The land had been claimed in the name of the Queen, and Elizabeth named the territory Virginia in honour of herself. Two Indians, Manteo and Wanchese, were carried back to England, where they were received with much ado. Raleigh was knighted and was in higher favour with the Queen than ever before. Arrangements were made to send out the first colony to the new land. The fleet sailed in the spring of 1585 under the

<sup>1</sup> Hakluyt's *Voyages*.

<sup>2</sup> Hakluyt's *Voyages*.

command of Richard Grenville, who was a cousin of Raleigh's. Ralph Lane, recalled from service in Ireland, was made Governor of the colony.

A fort was erected on Roanoke Island, where Amadas and Barlow had spent most of their time the year before. The first of a series of blunders in their relations with the natives was committed by Grenville when a silver mug was stolen by some of the Indians ; as a form of retaliation, he had the Indian village destroyed. Soon Grenville returned to England, promising to come back the following year with supplies for the 107 members of the colony.

Lane and his men explored the neighbouring territory and claimed it for England. They went as far north as the vicinity of Chesapeake Bay and eighty miles to the south of Roanoke Island. They also went inland up the Roanoke River. In the course of their explorations, they aroused the animosity of the Indians and brought on several skirmishes. Manteo and Wanchese, who had returned with the colonists, were divided in their allegiance : the former remained a friend, the latter became an enemy.

In spite of these difficulties, much was learned about the territory and Raleigh's judgment in sending a few men of high calibre and learning with Lane was sustained. Thomas Hariot, a mathematician and scientist of distinction, wrote a learned and useful report on the soil in Virginia and the plants which grew there ; it was called *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. He was subsequently to be honoured by the French philosopher, Descartes, for his contributions to mathematics. Hariot introduced three famous plants to England : tobacco, maize, and the potato. He was especially enthusiastic about the virtues of smoking, which Sir Walter was soon to make fashionable, claiming that the Indians

‘purged all gross humours from the head and stomach, opened all the pores and passages of the body, preserving it from obstructions or breaking them, whereby they notably preserved their health, and knew not many grievous diseases, wherewith we in England are often afflicted.’

An artist, John White, who was later to be in charge of the second colony, painted many pictures of Indian life which are now in the British Museum. Young Thomas Cavendish, who was later to circle the globe, obtained valuable experience bringing his boat from England after having been separated from the rest of the fleet by a storm.

Lane's men were beset with troubles. Food grew scarce, and they were faced with starvation. In June Drake stopped by to see the colonists while on his way home from one of his numerous pillaging expeditions. Grenville was long overdue with supplies, and Drake agreed to leave several boats with enough provisions to keep them in safety. But a storm arose and forced out to sea the ships with the provisions for the colonists. There was nothing else for Drake to do except to take Lane's men home with him. Meanwhile Raleigh had sent out a supply ship which arrived at Roanoke Island shortly after Drake's departure, and, as the colonists were gone, the ship returned to England. About two weeks after the arrival of the supply ship Grenville came with his fleet, bearing provisions and a few more settlers. He found no one at Roanoke, and, fearing to leave the island unoccupied lest England lose her newly claimed land, left fifteen men in charge of the fort.

In 1587 a second colony, with John White as Governor, was sent to Virginia. Lane's colony had had no women or children in it. Raleigh wisely corrected this condition in his second venture, for it was obvious that there could

be no successful colony without women and children. There were, all told, 89 men, 17 women, and 11 children in White's group.

The *Admiral*, a pinnace, and a fly-boat carried the colonists from Portsmouth on April 26, 1587, and they arrived at Hatteras, near Roanoke, on July 22. White went to get the men Grenville had left at the fort, but all that was found of that band was one skeleton. Acting on the advice of Lane, White intended to proceed northward to the Chesapeake Bay section to establish a colony where conditions were thought to be better for a settlement than they were at Roanoke Island. Simon Ferdinando, however, refused to pilot them thither, giving as his reason the lateness of the summer. So the colonists set to work repairing the old houses and erecting new ones on Roanoke Island.

On August 13 Manteo was baptised and made Lord of Roanoke. A few days later, August 18, the first English child was born in the New World to Ananias and Eleanor Dare; she was christened Virginia on the following Sunday. Eleanor Dare was the daughter of Governor White, and her husband was one of White's assistants. A man-child, the first English one born in America, arrived shortly after the birth of Virginia Dare. He was the son of Dionysus and Margery Harvie; his Christian name is unknown.

While these domestic events were taking place, the colonists decided that a member of the colony should return to England to see that supplies were sent and their interests looked after. Against his wishes the Governor was chosen to go, and on August 27 the ships sailed for England.

Upon White's return to England he found the country in a stir. The long-awaited struggle with Spain was drawing nearer and nearer. Every ship was being pressed into



service for the defence of the nation. Even so, Raleigh did not forget the colony, and he arranged for two small ships to carry supplies to them in April, 1588. They never arrived, however, for Spanish warships attacked them and forced their return. The dreaded Spanish Armada was bearing down upon England ; no one had time to think further of the colonists on far-away Roanoke Island. The Armada was vanquished, and with it went Spain's power : henceforth the English were to dominate the seas. Two more years were to pass before White was able to sail for America, as a passenger, with three ships bound for the West Indies. The ships were permitted to sail only on condition that they stop at the settlement with supplies. On August 15, 1590, they arrived at Hatteras. The sea was rough, and they had difficulty in reaching Roanoke Island. But despite several unsuccessful attempts, White was insistent that they go, and on nearing the island they 'sounded with a trumpet Call, & afterwarde many familiar English tunes of songs, and called to them friendly.'<sup>1</sup> But there was no answer. They landed and found only the fort still standing. On a tree near the landing-place, with a piece of bark stripped off, were found three Roman letters, C R O. Another tree near the fort had carved on it the word 'Croatan.' Before the Governor had returned to England, he had arranged that, in event they left for another location, they were to carve on a tree the name of the place to which they were going ; further, if they were in trouble, they were to make a cross near the word ; no sign of a cross was found. White thought that they were safe at Croatan, to the south of Roanoke Island, where their friend Manteo was born.

White planned to go to Croatan, but a hard storm struck

<sup>1</sup> Hakluyt's *Voyages*.

the sound, and, after losing several anchors, the party continued on their voyage to the West Indies. It was their intention at the time to return in the spring to look for the colonists. These plans went awry, however, and they returned to England without stopping by Virginia. This was White's last journey to America. Altogether Raleigh sent out five expeditions to search for the settlers; the last one was under the command of Captain Samuel Mace in 1602. Raleigh spent £40,000 on his colonial ventures, a sum considerably greater than now.

Why did the colonies fail? Historians differ among themselves as to the reason. Indeed, their failure was due to a combination of causes rather than to any one specific cause. For one thing, it was the first colonial endeavour for the English people; they lacked experience in enterprises of this nature. Sir Walter was unable to come to North America to give the colonists the benefit of his personal leadership, as the Queen had need of his services in England. Then, too, the location of the settlement was not so fortunate. The coast off Hatteras, with its treacherous reefs and bars, has long been known as 'the graveyard of the Atlantic.' But perhaps the hardest handicap to overcome was the conflict with Spain, with the attendant difficulty of supplying provisions and reinforcements to the colony. Also the settlers, especially Lane's men, were more interested in seeking gold than they were in the establishment and development of an agricultural colony. But few at that period could be expected to share the vision of Gilbert, Raleigh, and Hariot. A score of years was to pass between the establishment of the last colony at Roanoke Island and the founding of the first permanent English settlement in America at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607.

## II.

What became of the lost colony? Were they annihilated by the Indians? Or did they inter-marry with the natives of that region? Many explanations and hypotheses have been advanced, a few of which will be considered here.

It is to be noted at the outset that when White returned from England in search of his people no graves or skeletons were found. There is nothing to indicate in his report that he visited adjacent shores in search of them. What may have been an old Indian village has been found at Nags Head, on the reef across from Roanoke Island, at a point formerly occupied by one of the shifting sand-dunes for which that section is noted. Arrow-heads, uniform buttons, tomahawks, and fragments of china-ware and Indian pottery have been found in the sand at this spot. Unfortunately, no systematic excavation has ever been made of this site. A journalist of that locality, Mr. G. E. Dean, writes that there is a similar Indian mound in near-by Currituck County which likewise has never been examined by competent experts. It is possible that at some future date excavators may discover some new link with the lost colonists. It may be that the Indians went to the island and brought to their village the china-ware, uniforms, and weapons which had belonged to the colonists. Or, again, these objects may have been washed ashore as part of the strange store of the sea.

When the English first came to Jamestown in 1607, they were anxious to discover what had happened to White's people. Expeditions were sent out to look for them, but none of the colonists was ever seen. John Smith, in his *True Relation*, writes that some Indians had informed him of men dressed like Englishmen who lived in the territory between the Roanoke and Chowan rivers. Later the secre-

tary of the Jamestown colony, William Strachey, related a story in his *Historie of Travaile into Virginia Britannia* which was told him by Machumps, an intelligent Indian who often came to Jamestown. Machumps said that all the colonists, with the exception of four men, two boys, and a maid, had been murdered by Chief Powhatan about the time the new set of settlers arrived at Jamestown. Moreover, he related further that he had seen houses with stone walls, one floor above another, which the English had built. From the seven survivors of Powhatan's purge, it is assumed, came the tribe of Hatteras Indians. These accounts are obviously subject to much speculation. How reliable were the Indians and the tales they told? It is doubtful if Powhatan ever went that far south. He and his tribe lived on the James River, in the present locality of Richmond, Virginia, a long distance from Roanoke Island.

One of the earliest North Carolina historians, John Lawson, observes that the members of the Hatteras tribe had grey eyes and claimed white people as their ancestors. Lawson, who wrote his history in the early years of the eighteenth century, explored much of that section. When Amadas and Barlow first came to America in 1584 they saw Indian children with auburn hair; they were told that white men had come there years before as a result of a shipwreck and, after living there a short time, had departed in small boats in which they were lost at sea. This would indicate that there were mixed blooded Indians in that section before the arrival of the English. So it hardly follows, *per se*, that members of White's colony had gone to Hatteras and intermixed with the Indians, as there is at least one other way of accounting for the phenomena of grey eyes and brown hair among a few swarthy natives of that section.

The first intimation of a connection between the lost colonists and the Indians of Robeson County in North Carolina was made by Mr. Hamilton McMillan in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The Robeson County Indians said that they came from Roanoke in Virginia, that is, the Old Virginia of Elizabeth's reign. The major piece of evidence lay in the similarity of the family names of these Indians to those of the members of White's colony. It has been observed by a North Carolina historian and advocate of this theory, S. B. Weeks, that there were 95 different surnames in White's group of 117 members. Of these surnames 41, or more than 43 per cent., have been found among the Robeson County Indians; some of the names are Howe, Berry, Dare, Harvie, and so forth. Weeks traces the movements of the Croatans through a maze of history in summing up this theory:

'Smith and Strachey heard that the colonists of 1587 were still alive about 1607. They were then living on the peninsula of Dasamonguepeuk whence they travelled towards the region of the Chowan and Roanoke rivers. From this point they travelled towards the south-west, and settled on the upper waters of the Neuse. John Lederer heard of them in this direction in 1670 and remarked on their beards, which were never worn by full-blooded Indians. Rev. John Blair heard of them in 1704. John Lawson met some of the Croatan Indians about 1709, and was told that their ancestors were white men. White settlers came into the middle section of North Carolina as early as 1715, and found the ancestors of the present tribe of Croatan Indians tilling the soil, holding slaves, and speaking English. The Croatans of to-day claim descent from the lost colony. Their habits, disposition, and mental characteristics show traces both of savage and civilised ancestry. Their language is the English of three hundred years ago, and their names are in many cases the same as those borne by the original

colonists. No other theory of their origin has been advanced, and it is confidently believed that the one here proposed is logically and historically the best, supported as it is, both by external and internal evidence. If this theory is rejected, then the critic must explain in some other way the origin of a people which, after the lapse of three hundred years, show the characteristics, speak the language, and possess the family names of the second English colony planted in the western world.' <sup>1</sup>

The weakness of the foregoing is apparent inasmuch as one error at any one point in the chain would render the theory false, or would certainly cripple it considerably. Another historian, Captain S. A. Ashe, is not inclined to accept this theory and views it from a different angle :

'Because names borne by some of the colonists have been found among a mixed race in Robeson County, now called Croatans, an inference has been drawn that there was some connection between them. It is highly improbable that English names would have been preserved among a tribe of savages beyond the second generation, there being no communication except with other savages. If English names had existed among the Hatteras Indians in Lawson's time, he probably would have mentioned it as additional evidence corroborating his suggestion deduced from some of them having grey eyes, and from their valuing themselves on their affinity to the English. It is also to be observed that nowhere among the Indians were found houses or tilled land or other evidences of improvement on the customs and manners of the aborigines.' <sup>2</sup>

The legal status of the Robeson County Indians has been altered several times during the past century. In 1835 they were deprived of their franchise and were treated as 'free

<sup>1</sup> Weeks, Stephen B., *The Lost Colony of Roanoke*. New York : The Knickerbocker Press. 1891. (Reprinted from *Papers of the American Historical Association*, vol. v, pp. 439-80.)

<sup>2</sup> Ashe, Samuel A., *History of North Carolina*, vol. I. Greensboro, N.C. : Charles L. Van Noppen, Publisher. 1925.

persons of colour.' After the Civil War attempts were made to force these Indians to attend Negro schools ; this they refused to do. Through the efforts of McMillan on their behalf, they were granted schools of their own in 1885 and were also recognised officially as Croatan Indians. In 1913, through another act of the General Assembly of North Carolina, they were designated as Cherokee Indians. To what tribe do these Indians belong ? Dr. John R. Swanton, of the Bureau of American Ethnology of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, has traced the various movements of the tribes of Indians found in Virginia and the Carolinas during the past 350 years and has reached these conclusions regarding the origin of the Robeson County Indians :

'Evidence that these people were connected with the Croatan is still less valid. Croatan was the name of an island and an Algonquian Indian town just north of Hatteras, to which the survivors of the Raleigh colony are supposed to have gone since, when White revisited the site of the colony on Roanoke Island in 1590, he found no trace of it except the name "Croatan" carved upon a tree. But, assuming that the colonists did remove to Croatan, there is not a bit of reason to suppose that either they or the Croatan Indians ever went farther inland.

'The evidence available thus seems to indicate that the Indians of Robeson County who have been called Croatan and Cherokee are descended mainly from certain Siouan tribes of which the most prominent were the Cheraw and Keyauwee. . . . Therefore, if the name of any one tribe is to be used in connection with this body of six or eight thousand people, that of the Cheraw would, in my opinion, be most appropriate. A more exact characterisation would be "Siouan Indians of Lumber River."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Swanton, John R., *Probable Identity of the 'Croatan' Indians*. Washington : U.S. Department of the Interior. 1933. Mimeographed bulletin.

Weeks has noted that if the Indians of Robeson County are not descendants of the lost colonists, then they must be accounted for in some other way. Ashe suggests a possible origin :

‘ These Indians, whites, and negroes, calling themselves Croatans, were lawless when first mentioned in history about 1750, and continued to be so. They spoke English, but avoided other white people. About 1870 Henry Berry Lowry was leader of this gang of outlaws, and kept the country terrorised ; armed troops had to guard all trains passing through the forest where he lived. The ancestors of these whites were probably a part of the pirate crew of Bonet’s, who escaped when he was captured on the Cape Fear, where he had his headquarters. These escaped pirates would naturally avoid white men, as if taken they would have been hanged ; and their descendants might well have inherited this fear with their lawless characters.’<sup>1</sup>

There is another speculation which is interesting because of the possibilities it holds. The Spaniards were opposed to English colonisation in America. They had become a powerful nation through their holdings there and did not want a competitor. In 1564 a band of Huguenots settled in Florida. A short time after that the French Protestants were slaughtered by the Spaniards, who had settled in that region some years before. Simon Ferdinando was suspected by White of attempting to wreck the ships and hinder the colony as much as possible. Whether or not Ferdinando was in the service of Spain is an open question, but he was familiar with the North American coast and could easily have supplied to the Spanish authorities information concerning the colony. It is possible, judging by the relations between Spain and England at that time, that the colonists were removed to Spain, tried, jailed, or put to death.

<sup>1</sup> From a letter to the writer, August 22, 1937.



Again, it may be that the Spaniards incited the Indians to slay the English.

For the anniversary celebration held at Roanoke Island last summer Mr. Paul Green, the American playwright, wrote a pageant-drama, *The Lost Colony*. While engaged in a study of this period, he saw transcripts of some of the Spanish records in the Library of Congress at Washington. 'From the numerous mentions of Raleigh and references to his colony on Roanoke Island (which was called el Jacan),' Mr. Green wrote, 'I got the idea that a thorough search of these records would throw considerable light on that whole period of our civilisation.'<sup>1</sup> A careful sifting and study of the Spanish records of that time in the archives at Madrid might indeed pick Time's lock and clear the mystery of the fate of the long-lost colonists.

### III.

Legend and folk-lore are inevitably the forerunners of literature. Primitive though it may be, folk-lore forms the basis on which literature is founded. It is not by accident, therefore, that the Indian has figured so prominently in American letters. In the epic poems of Henry W. Longfellow and in the poems of Philip Freneau, in the novels of Charles Brockden Brown, James Fenimore Cooper, and William Gilmore Simms, to mention only a few writers, the Red Man has found a lasting and by no means small place in the literature of the United States.

The oldest legend relating to the English in North America deals with the transformation of Virginia Dare into a white doe. After John White had left the colonists on Roanoke Island in 1587, the legend runs, the Indians, led by Wanchese, the treacherous warrior, killed all the members of

<sup>1</sup> From a letter to the writer, August 15, 1937.

the colony save Ananias and Eleanor Dare and their daughter Virginia. The elder Dares, broken and sick, soon died, and Virginia was adopted by the tribe. Her name was changed to Winona; whenever a relative died it was customary for the living to change their names lest the spirit of the dead return, recognise them by their old names, and do them a mischief. Winona lived with the Indians and eventually grew up. A young brave, Okisko by name, fell in love with her. Now the medicine man, or magician, the aged Chico, likewise was smitten by Winona's charms and changed her, with the aid of magic, into a white doe to prevent Okisko from marrying her.

The graceful young animal wandered over the island and grazed on the green grass. She would be seen here, then there, but none were able to capture her. Winona, or the white doe, was a charmed creature.

Meanwhile Okisko had learned from Wenando, a magician of another tribe, that the white doe was Winona, and the friendly magician, taking pity on him, gave the young lover a magic arrow which would restore Winona to her original form when pierced in the heart by this arrow. Now Wanchese had been one of the two Indians to cross the great waters to England, and while there he had been given an arrow made of silver. He knew the silver arrow would overcome the charm which shielded the animal. A hunt was formed to catch the white doe. It so happened one day, while the white doe peered out of a thicket near the water's edge, that Okisko and Wanchese saw her at the same moment. Carefully each took aim, and each sped his arrow with a different motive, straight for the heart of the white doe. She fell to the ground and was at once enveloped in a greyish mist by the angered gods of earth and sky. The mist cleared, and revealed the dead Winona,

or Virginia Dare. Both arrows had accomplished their purpose ; Okisko's magic arrow had restored the bewitched animal to her original form, while Wanchese's silver weapon had overcome the charm and killed her. Okisko buried her deep in the forest beneath a great pile of many-coloured autumn leaves. To this day it is considered a bad omen in that section to see a white doe.

There is another version of the same legend which has a different ending. The friendly magician explained to Okisko that only an arrow dipped in the magic fountain of Roanoke could restore Winona to her self again. Wanchese and Okisko saw the white doe jump into the clearing and both released their bows simultaneously. Immediately the white doe was transformed into Winona. Okisko rushed to her side, clasped her in his arms, and the expiring girl had only time to gasp her name, ' Virginia Dare,' and died. The magic fountain dried up, and in its stead a grape-vine grew, much to the marvel of all. Okisko took it as a sign from his lost Winona. At last it blossomed and bore fruit. The grapes were red and made red wine. Okisko thought that he was drinking Winona's blood, and he knew at last that he was united with her once more, that he could never lose her.

The Mother Scuppernong vine still grows on Roanoke Island. This aged plant may have been brought from the mainland and planted by Lane's men. It bore grapes with white skins and white pulps and made a white wine. Now there were other vines which produced grapes with red skins and red pulps from which a red wine was extracted. According to legend, this latter vine is attributed to the death of Virginia Dare by the silver arrow.

Lawson relates the story of a ghost ship which often appeared to the Croatan Indians on the coast. It was seen

coming towards land with all its white sails spread out to the wind. The Croatans called it Sir Walter Raleigh's ship, the one which brought the first colonists over.

Although confined in the Tower, Raleigh lived to see the beginning of his dream of empire take definite form at Jamestown. He sacrificed his fortune and finally his head for the furtherance of that dream ; he in truth was the first of England's empire builders. As for the colonists themselves, it was they who brought here the English language which was to expand from Roanoke westward to the Pacific. Of their courage, of their faith, and of their sacrifice, one is reminded of Miranda's lines in *The Tempest* :

*How many goodly creatures are there here !  
How beauteous mankind is ! O brave new world,  
That has such people in it !*

*Raleigh, North Carolina.*

#### IN WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

*They step unthinkingly with boyish tread  
Over cold stones that roof the pulseless dead ;  
Beneath lie men, long since to dust returned,  
Whose beating hearts with hope and valour burned,  
Men who, once young as they, trod eager here—  
Heedless of faction, unaware of fear—  
Pause then, quick Youth, and ponder on the tomb,  
Where men must lie forgotten in the gloom.  
Death, through all Time, has never been defied,  
But man's built works endure, man's words abide.*

DONALD ADAMI BAIN.

(Aged 15.)

*ANDROCLES.*

BY G. LACEY MAY.

## I.

PETER JOHN BRYANCY was in that blessed stage which a happy day may chance to offer a favoured wight between his waking and uprising. Already the balmy sun of a May morning was flooding the bedroom. His wife was gently moving about in her dressing-room next door ; and there remained to him the joyous consciousness that breakfast was not until half-past nine, and that he would be the last member of the household to sit down to it.

Meanwhile his thoughts wandered between dreamland and reality. In the far distance breakfast cups clattered gently ; whilst a discreet—very discreet—fragrance of hot coffee and fried bacon began to steal into the offing. With closed eyes he could imagine himself stretched in that warm sunshine of the Alps which never melts the eternal snows, or even—a second Antony—borne by the Nile's smooth flood upon Cleopatra's gilded barge.

In one of those half-moments when the conscious defeated the subconscious and the fragrance of coffee was routing Cleopatra, he saw through half-closed lids, very near to him—so near that at first it seemed nearly as large as a hen—a tiny insect climbing painfully across the ridge of bedsheet opposite his nose. Concentrating his attention on the little beast, he found it to be one of those tiny spiders whose frail legs seem scarcely able to support their frailer bodies. It was clambering along the sheet in front of his face, from one

side of the bed to the other, in grim determination to do or die in this great adventure of its little span.

The concentration of mind demanded of Peter Bryancy for his stare at this little insect definitely woke him for rising and dressing. As he got out of bed, he carefully scooped the tiny spider into one of his hands, and carried it towards a window. 'Why, Peter,' cried his wife, entering the room, 'what are you carrying so carefully?' He showed her what it was, and explained that it seemed so frail and delicate a thing that he could not leave it to be crushed by one of their feet or by Harriet's carpet-sweeper. 'You are a queer old bird,' taunted his wife half-admiringly; 'how many men would trouble about a trifle like that?' And as she spoke, the spider slid (reluctantly, as it seemed, for it made last efforts to cling to the protecting fingers) from Peter's hand into the ivy below the window.

## II.

Three months later Bryancy was down with acute pneumonia. Afterwards they told him that it took nine days to reach his crisis, but it seemed to him nine months packed with heat and weariness and shivering and suffocation and madness. During that period, apart from these physical sensations, he had travelled over the dome of the world, seen every land under the sun, crossed every star-lit space. No land had been too vast for him to traverse, no river too wide to swim, no canyon too deep to penetrate, no sea too boundless to sail, no mountain-peak too high to climb.

Not that he needed to travel far afield for his experiences. Often vast erections built themselves around his bedside. One night he found himself in the most immense of cathedrals, vaster than even a Yankee's dreams. Round about him towered columns, capitals, arches, aisles, mostly in the

Moorish style—unpeopled, unused, but glowing with Apocalyptic colours to charm the mind and thrill the imagination.

Another night he was surrounded by the vast tiers of a huge hardwareman's warehouse. Quite close to him on every side, at the head and foot and sides of his bed—so close that he could put out his hand from time to time to touch them—rose endless shelves of saucepans, kettles, pans. He was sorely puzzled to find them retreat when he tried to grasp them.

When the hardware stores vanished, their place was taken by thousands of human faces, mowing, gibbering, gesticulating—all silent, many cruel and obscene, most of them humorously sly and waggish. These visages bewildered him by their blinking and kaleidoscopic dancing.

Through these phantasies one feature was of constant recurrence. The brass knobs of the foot of his bedstead ran through all these pictures of his imagination. They seemed strangely out of place—irritatingly so—in the cathedral; it was more natural—though a little surprising—to find them among the pots and pans and the gibbering faces.

These visions, for the most part, were interesting rather than distressing. But there was an awful experience which recurred from time to time (in lucid intervals he found that this happened invariably between two and four in the morning), when he was seized by an unspeakable horror, when the essence of his whole being was being broken up, and he was sinking, sinking, into a hopeless abyss of loathsome and disintegrating nothingness. When he woke from this sensation, it reminded him of the opening lines of the *Dream of Gerontius*. Sometimes the horror took the form of an incessant wandering through endless passages which always ended up in the same cul-de-sac. After waking, he would

doze off again, knowing that he would be launched instantaneously into this same hopeless and bitter misery. And the terror lasted for some seconds after awaking—the wakening being always accomplished by some clever nurse (how on earth did she get into his room?), who used to ask in a voice cool and quiet and apparently quite unshaken by the existence of such horrors, ‘Is there anything I can do for you, Mr. Bryancy?’ But why should she show such unspeakable cruelty as not to awake him earlier and so disperse his agony!

### III.

On the ninth night of his illness, his fancies took quite another shape. It was this—everything had turned to water! The heavens had broken up and poured down their floods; the springs of the earth had welled up to meet them. Cataracts, waterfalls, inland floods, and sea-moving masses, raged and tore and swelled and clamoured. He had never—silly fellow!—quite believed in the story of the Deluge, on the ground that there could never be enough water to cover the whole earth. Why, here was enough for a thousand deluges!

It was curious to watch this cataclysm dispassionately, as an interested or disinterested outsider. He remembered Lucretius’ famous description of man’s helplessness, and he felt himself a little naked child on the shores of a boundless sea.

Suddenly the floods took shape, and their roaring ceased, as they became a vast river—a river flowing before him, quite close, full of peace and calm, and lit up with a radiancy which penetrated his innermost being. This river, unlike the floods, had intimately to do with himself; wasn’t it something rather like the road of life? Queer memories of his early childhood and of his mother (he had had a good



mother) mingled in the murmur of its smooth tide—even games and lessons and long-forgotten incidents. This went on for some time, with great comfort to his soul. Once he laughed aloud at a recollection of his boyish days. He saw once more an old plum-coloured hen, clucking about in his father's yard at home. He had always hated it ; and now he saw himself again hurl a stone and hit the offending bird upon the head, so that it dropped. Dead ! He buried it carefully in a little ditch, and covered its corpse with leaves. Then his tender conscience struck him, and he ran as fast as his little legs could carry him to tell the awful tale to his mother. She had always trained her children to confess their misdoings at once, and so escape the condign punishment otherwise sure to ensue. 'Never mind, dear,' this wise mother had said ; 'let us go and have a look.' So, hand-in-hand, they sallied into the yard ; and lo ! there was the hateful hen, recovered from her stunning, strutting about once more ! He could hardly tell which feeling had predominated in his mind—relief at such a happy ending, or regret that he had confessed a deed which after all would have escaped notice ! The vividness of the scene rung a laugh from him now. Then suddenly, in the midst of an extreme quiet, he heard two things said very softly, but very plainly : his wife's question, 'Is it all over, doctor ?' and the doctor's answer, 'I'm afraid so.'

#### IV.

Now at this point a curious thing happened to Peter Bryancy. The events here described had but a contingent sense of reality. Though real and with a body of their own, they savoured rather of the abstract than of the concrete, rather of the realities of dreamland or of the mind than of visual sight.

But that which came to him now was visual and concrete and made an urgent claim upon his attention. Whilst he was dwelling in a serene aloofness upon these strange words of his wife and doctor, he saw something vast bearing down upon him along the road. For the river had by now quite definitely become a great white road passing before his eyes—such a road as you see in Sussex, broad and strong to bear its harvest wains and droves of cattle. Along this road, from its extreme right, was lurching a monstrous animal. Monstrous not so much as to size (though he surmised it to have the bulk, say, of a large buffalo) as to its appearance. For though its height suggested a buffalo, it was unlike a buffalo or any other living creature. Could—during this endless illness of his—a new species have evolved on earth? That was incredible; yet what otherwise could be said of a beast as high as a bullock, but with no visible head, a body shaped like a huge warming-pan, and lengthy legs which tapered to earth in a tremulousness which betrayed the enormous strain of supporting even so tame a body?

Little by little, however, as Bryancy gazed, he became aware that he had altogether mistaken the size of this monstrosity. As it swayed along the road, painfully drawing nearer in its halting manner, it became curiously smaller; indeed, in a few seconds it had dwindled almost to nothing! The road itself was growing smaller; its surface was rolling up into convolutions not unlike those of the human brain, with broad rolls, divided by narrow crevices. And by the time that the beast had reached the middle of one of those white convolutions in the road exactly opposite Bryancy's eyes, it had become fairly clear to him that the road in question was the roll of the bedclothes near his chin, and the monstrous animal was a tiny spider which seemed somehow

strangely familiar to him, and which had halted exactly opposite his eyes.

His vision focussed this much sharply. All that surrounded this was still vague and misty, but through the mist he saw a figure kneeling by his bedside. Then he heard from a great distance a thin reedy voice (strange it should be so like his own !), which said, 'Is that you, Lucile ?' 'Oh, darling Peter,' cried his wife with sob-broken voice, 'are you *really* feeling better ?'

He fell at once into a very feeble but very healthy slumber. His wife hurried to the telephone to ring up the doctor with her astounding news. When she returned, she mechanically brushed off from the counterpane a meticulous spider which was resting opposite her husband's face.

## V.

Dr. Hartwell was amazed at Mrs. Bryancy's telephone message, arriving, as it did, before he had been ten minutes from her house. Curious things happen in every doctor's experience ; but not often does a patient revive five minutes after he has clearly died. Did such a contingency rank with matters physical or psychological or spiritual ? Well, investigation might show, and even afford some clue to the problem which so persistently haunts a doctor's footsteps, as to where exactly lies the borderland betwixt bodily and spiritual.

He hurried off, and found his patient in a genuine sleep. 'You are a very fortunate woman, Mrs. Bryancy,' he said, 'it is nothing short of a miracle ; to all appearances, your husband died just before I left you. Now with extreme care and good nursing, he ought to recover.'

During the five-minutes' drive home to his house the

doctor, a careful driver and the devoted father of children, nearly slew an indignant butcher's boy, who saved himself only by leaping at the nearest lamp-post as the doctor's car skimmed his hind-wheel ; and he shattered the nerves of a young mother when by a margin of three inches he dodged the pram in which she was wheeling her first-born. But the doctor was not thinking of butcher-boys or babies. ' Now ' —he was saying to himself—' what possible power in heaven and earth can have brought that fellow back ? '

But Androcles' lion had no difficulty in guarding that little secret !

### TO A MINIATURE.

*O sweet, grave face, of such rare loveliness,  
With lips soft-curving in a wistful smile,  
And eyes of grey, dream-haunted tenderness  
Seeming to ponder on the world awhile ;  
O little face, so purely, fairly wrought,  
And fashioned with such wondrous artistry,  
What lesson could the world so soon have taught  
That formed that look of sweet austerity ?  
Those lips were surely never meant to be  
So wistful in their smiling, nor those eyes  
To hold such sadness in their tenderness.  
Had I been guardian of their happiness  
I would have been more careful and more wise  
Than to let Sorrow make her home with thee.*

N. LANGTON.

## THE BRONTËS IN IRELAND

BY MYRTLE JOHNSTON.

' WE first saw a group of the Brontë brothers together. I think there were six of them, and they were marching in step across a field towards a level road. They were dressed alike in homespun and home-knitted garments that fitted them closely and showed up to perfection their large, lithe and muscular forms. . . . They appeared to be men of gigantic stature. They bounded lightly over all the fences that stood in their way, all springing from the ground and alighting together ; and they continued to march in step without an apparent effort until they reached the public road, and then began in a business-like way to settle conditions in preparation for a serious contest. . . . They did not seem to notice us, or know that we were present, but proceeded with a match of hurling a large metal ball along the road. . . . Every ounce of elastic force in the great muscular frames was called into action and there was a profusion of strange, strong language that literally made our flesh to creep and our hair to stand on end. . . . We had never seen men like the Irish Brontës and we had never heard language like theirs. . . . Our interest, however, in the Brontës was shared by no one. They were then neither prophets nor heroes in their own country, and they were regarded with a kind of superstitious dread by their neighbours, rather than with interest or curiosity. . . . We learnt that the Brontës had a brother, a clergyman, in England, " a fine gentleman," then on a visit to them.'

Such is the description of the uncles of Charlotte and Emily Brontë in 1812, four years before Charlotte was born, given by an eye-witness to a certain Dr. William Wright.

The same witness and his brother, both boys at the time,

were led by their interest in these men, 'so different from the local gentry, farmers, flax-dressers, and such-like people who lived around them,' to hide in a glen where they were told the Brontës held family 'concerts' on sunny afternoons. They saw a sister spinning and a brother fiddling, while 'two of the sisters and the other brothers were whirling and spinning lightly over the grass.'

The girls, like their brothers, were tall, handsome and graceful in their homespun and red tippets.

Of these girls, Charlotte Brontë's aunts, another writes, who knew them personally,

'—all but the one that got married. The rest lived and died unmarried. They were fine stalwart good-looking women, with rather a masculine build and carriage. . . . They were not ordinary women. They were essentially women of character, and I think men were perhaps a little afraid of them.'

I make no apologies for drawing, or re-drawing, attention to Dr. Wright's book, recently stumbled upon at my favourite second-hand book-stall, which has given me some hours' entertainment. For all I know, it may hold an honoured place in Brontë literature, or it may be discredited and disowned. If it is familiar to a hundred Brontë students it may be unfamiliar to a hundred, as it was to me; and perhaps these will share my interest in a rather curious work.

At all events, it was this book—*The Brontës in Ireland*, published 1893—which Miss May Sinclair had in mind, I think, when she wrote (*The Three Brontës*):

'Tales are told of his (the Rev. Patrick Brontë's) father and his forefathers, peasants and peasant farmers of Ballynaskeagh in County Down. They seem to have been

notorious for their energy, eccentricity and imagination and a certain tendency to turbulence and excess.'

Dr. Wright sub-titles his book, 'Facts stranger than Fiction.' The title is deserved. But one thing is indubitable—Dr. Wright's own honesty and his sincere appreciation of the Haworth Brontës. He hits off Branwell in a neat phrase when he describes him in the eyes of his stalwart Uncle Jamie Brontë as 'too small and fantastic and a chatterer.' He sensibly points out, mindful of the censure of Patrick Brontë for planting his family within six feet of a churchyard and feeding them on potatoes, that a man brought up with ten brothers and sisters on potatoes and buttermilk in an Irish hovel, of which one of the two rooms was used as a corn-kiln, would scarcely boggle at a graveyard or, for that matter, at putting five little girls in one room, however small. To Patrick's brothers and sisters Haworth Parsonage would have seemed a thoroughly covetable residence.

Dr. Wright spent his youth in County Down at a time when

'the macadamising of the roads in the neighbourhood was practically a monopoly in the Brontë family. I remember the excellent carts and horses employed by the Brontës on the roads, and I also distinctly recollect that the names painted on the carts were spelled "Brontë," the pronunciation being "Brunty," never "Prunty," as has been alleged.'

If that is so, local pronunciation may easily have misled investigators.

Dr. Wright tells us that his first classical tutor, a Mr. McAllister, had known Patrick Brontë as a child and had heard Patrick's father, Hugh, grandfather of the novelists, narrate 'to a spell-bound audience' the history of his early

life. This history Dr. Wright, with *his* theory of the novels, jealously believes to have been the germ, not only of *Wuthering Heights*, but, apparently, of *Agnes Grey* and *Jane Eyre* and *Shirley* and *Villette*.

Mr. McAllister, as part of his teaching, used to tell his pupil Hugh Brontë's stories—with the remark that they were as worthy to be recorded as the wrath of Achilles. The pupil would thereupon record them. 'It thus happened that I wrote screeds of the Brontë novels before a line of them had ever been penned at Haworth.' A qualification claimed, surely, by no other Brontë historian.

The story, and stories, of their grandfather, Hugh, were related by Patrick Brontë to his daughters, who, Miss Nussey told Dr. Wright, 'sat in breathless silence, their prominent eyes starting out of their heads.' Miss Nussey's ignorance of the stories, and the Brontës' utter silence on their Irish family history and connections, is accounted for by the explanation :

'The Brontës were too proud to talk, even to their most intimate friends, of their Irish home, much less to expose the foibles of their immediate ancestors to phlegmatic English ears.'

A reason not inconsistent with Irish character in England.

Early in the eighteenth century the Brontës would appear to have been prosperous cattle-dealers living on their farm near Drogheda.

In the hold of a cattle-boat on which Charlotte Brontë's great-great-grandfather was returning from Liverpool with his wife, a derelict child was discovered. 'It was very young, very black, very dirty.' Mr. and Mrs. Brontë adopted it. This child, when a man and known as Welsh Brontë on account of his dark colouring—the Brontës were



all fair—is said to have murdered and robbed his benefactor. He certainly swindled the family out of their farm, reducing them to indigence, and tricked the youngest sister, Mary, into marriage with him. Obviously Welsh Brontë stands for Heathcliff, and also, more surprisingly, for the unpleasant Mrs. Reed in *Jane Eyre*. A description (sources not given) of his personal appearance when, dressed in his best, he approached his adopted family to bargain for Mary's hand, scarcely tallies with that of either of his prototypes :

‘ The upholstery must have been costly but the effect was ludicrous to those who had known the man all their lives. The sinister look was intensified by the smile of satisfaction that gave prominence at once to the cast in both eyes and to the jackal-like dentals.’

By this evil personage Hugh Brontë, grandfather of the novelists, was brought up on the shores of the Boyne, having been adopted from his own father. He was treated horribly. His only comfort was his uncle's dog—called Keeper. He escaped in his 'teens from his guardian and, after working at the lime-kilns at Mount Pleasant, and as a hired servant, he married the beautiful, but Catholic, Alice McClory (‘ the younger Catherine Linton ’), who defied her family by turning Protestant for his sake.

Their home was a thatched, two-roomed cabin in Emdale, County Down. Here Patrick Brontë was born—eldest of five boys and five girls. Dr. Wright saw the cabin when it had fallen into ruin and was being used as a byre.

‘ A farmer's wife whose ancestors lived close to the Brontë house long before the Brontës were heard of in County Down, pointing to a spot in the corner of the byre opposite the window, said, “ There is the very spot where the Rev. Patrick Brontë was born. . . . Numbers of great folk have asked me about his birthplace, but och ! how could I tell

them that any dacent man was ever born in such a place ? ” This feeling on the part of the neighbours,’ adds Dr. Wright, ‘ will probably account for the fact that everything written thus far (1893) regarding Patrick Brontë’s birthplace is wrong, neither the townland nor even the parish of his birth being correctly given.’

Hugh Brontë, a forceful, intelligent Irishman, prospered in his business of kiln-drying corn and of raising sod fences in the fields until he was able to remove his family to the comfortable farm at Ballynaskeagh which they occupied for the rest of their lives. The Brontës were among the first in the county to see the value of the new process of macadamising roads, and thus added substantially to their income. They quarried and broke their own stones.

As well as inspiring *Wuthering Heights*, Hugh Brontë is here claimed to have indirectly inspired the Irish patriot John Mitchell with his own advanced doctrine of tenants’ rights. Hugh was half-illiterate, although he taught himself to read the Bible and is locally testified to have been a famed teller of tales. After his death two of his sons, Patrick’s brothers, opened public-houses in the district,

‘ and from that moment,’ says Dr. Wright, ‘ so far as I have been able to make out, the tide of the Brontë prosperity turned. . . . They ceased to work on the roads, and the hard-earned money slipped through their fingers, and the public-houses became the meeting-places for the fast and wild youth of the locality. . . . I remember both these pests in full force. They were much frequented by Orangemen who, when tired of playing “The Protestant Boys,” used to slake their thirst and fire their hatred of the *Papishes* by drinking Brontë’s whiskey. . . . It is interesting to remember that when the drinking habits of the country were at their height, the temperance reformation was begun in Great Britain by the best friend the Brontës had, the Rev. David McKee. It is of still greater interest to our present

investigation to know that Mr. McKee was moved to the action which has resulted in the great temperance reform by the Brontë public-houses at his door, and by the demoralisation they were creating.'

One of the brothers, William, was a United Irishman, and narrowly escaped being killed at the battle of Ballynahinch. Another, Jamie, was a shoemaker. His youngest sister, Alice, told Dr. Wright that Jamie once visited his brother at Haworth, and he reported that his niece Charlotte was 'terrible sharp and inquisitive.'

Patrick Brontë thought of becoming a blacksmith, decided for a weaver, and was later helped by his father's old employer to his position at Glascar school, where the pupils paid a penny a week each and a sod of turf. An abortive love affair with a red-haired pupil lost him his post of teacher at Glascar. Ineradicable odium attached to him, in a stronghold of Protestant bigotry, by the fact of his mother's having been a Catholic. Dr. Wright maintains it was this circumstance which drove Patrick to England.

'He would escape for ever from the cry of "Mongrel" and "Papish Pat" that every Protestant urchin shouted after him on account of his mother's maiden religion.'

(Note Charlotte's detestation of Catholicism.) This fact also did much to deepen the Brontës' prideful and curious isolation from their neighbours.

Alice Brontë told Dr. Wright that they had received from Haworth a presentation copy of *Jane Eyre*, and of each of the novels, and had instantly read 'Currer Bell' as 'Charlotte Brontë' before the reading public had even begun to ask questions. (Dr. Wright naïvely admits that he possesses evidence which contradicts this.) The Irish Brontës had never seen a novel. Their amusements were

cockfighting, dancing, shooting (at which Patrick had excelled) and 'ghost-baiting' in the Haunted Glen. If their niece was concealing her name it must be because there was something to be concealed. The third brother Hugh—called 'The Giant'—took *Jane Eyre*, wrapped in a red handkerchief, to the Rev. Mr. McKee at Ballynaskeagh manse, confessed, in a sepulchral whisper, his suspicion of the author and begged Mr. McKee as a favour to examine it.

Mr. McKee sat down with the first volume at once. At the end of some hours when the light had failed,

' "Hughey," ' he said, breaking the silence, ' the book bears the Brontë stamp on every sentence and idea and it's the grandest novel that has been produced in my time. . . . The child Jane Eyre is your father in petticoats, and Mrs. Reed is the wicked uncle by the Boyne.' '

Soon, according to Alice Brontë and Dr. Wright, the eulogistic reviews began pouring in. At Ballynaskeagh the Brontës did not contain their triumph and self-gratification. Their taciturnity vanished. So did their aloofness. As a matter of fact one *can* see them waylaying 'uninterested and unappreciative listeners' with 'scraps of praise cut from the Newry papers or supplied to them from English sources by Mr. McKee.'

The Brontës had never been popular. Old Hugh Brontë, besides marrying 'a 'Papish,' had committed the sin of industry and prosperity. His children, in addition to being the offspring of a converted Papish, 'set themselves up' and 'kept themselves to themselves.' It is believable that friends who had looked blank at all mention of *Frazer* and *Blackwood* would seize on the report of the famous attack in the *Quarterly* with avid glee.

'The neighbours of the Brontës had very vague ideas as to what the *Quarterly* might be.' But he, she, or it had said

that Papish Pat's girl for sufficient reasons had forfeited the society of her sex, and that was that.

There was only one thing the outraged Brontës could do ; Hugh took upon himself to do it.

Near the farm grew a young blackthorn sapling.

' It had arrived at maturity about the time the diabolical article appeared in the *Quarterly*. The supreme moment of his (Hugh's) life had arrived and the weapon on which he depended was ready. . . . His first act was to dig up the blackthorn carefully, so that he might have enough of the thick root to form a lethal club. Having pruned it roughly, he placed the butt end in warm ashes night after night to season. Then when it had become sapless and hard he reduced it to its final dimensions. Afterwards he steeped it in brine, or " put in pickle " as the saying goes, and when it had been a sufficient time in the salt water he took it out and rubbed it with chamois and train-oil for hours. Then came the final process. He shot a magpie, drained its blood into a cup and with the lapped blood polished the blackthorn till it became black with a mahogany tint. The shillelagh was then a beautiful, tough formidable weapon, and when tipped with an iron ferrule, was quite ready for action.'

Dr. Wright is not to be blamed. Mr. McKee, or Alice Brontë, from whom he had the story, are hardly to be blamed. It is what should have happened. It is what Hugh Brontë might have brooded fiercely upon. It is what he, or another Irishman in his place and day, might have been quite capable of. The Irish, as a race, with infallible artistic imagination usually see to it that what should have happened did in fact happen.

Hugh Brontë the Giant, then, crossed with his shillelagh to Liverpool, walked to Haworth and arrived at the Parsonage to be rated by the Parsonage's Martha for travelling on a Sabbath.

'The declaration of Hugh's mission of revenge was received by Charlotte with incredulous astonishment. But gentle Anne sympathised with him and wished him well. Had it not been for Anne's enthusiastic encouragement' (you can see Anne reverentially fingering the shillelagh) 'Hugh would have returned straight home from Haworth in disgust. Patrick, as befitted a clergyman, condemned the undertaking and did what he could to amuse Hugh, and to draw his mind from its fierce intent.'

In fact he took him to a prize-fight. Hugh was unamused. His comment was that he could have licked both fighters and 'eaten half-a-dozen of the men he saw in England.'

He went to London, took lodgings, and found his way to John Murray's. He said he was Currer Bell's uncle and wished to see her reviewer in the *Quarterly*. He kept on coming to Murray's and seeing the Editor of the *Quarterly*, who prodded him for information about Currer Bell. He declined to make any statement except to the reviewer. The shillelagh was conspicuous. 'They ceased to admit him at Murray's.'

'I admire,' says Dr. Wright, 'the loyalty of John Murray to a servant (the reviewer) whose work has attained an evil pre-eminence. It is interesting to know in these prying and babbling times that in the house of Murray the secret of even a supposed ruffian is safe to the third generation.'

Undaunted, the Avenger went to the publishers of *Jane Eyre*. He frankly showed them the shillelagh and appealed for their assistance.

'They treated him civilly without furthering his quest; but he got from them an introduction to the reading-room of the British Museum and to several other reading-rooms.'

It seems hardly relevant. However, he met in the British Museum 'a kind old gentleman,' who listened, sympathised,

and gave a dinner for him, at which a number of people examined the shillelagh, called on its owner for a speech, cheered him and drank his health. They even promised to find him the reviewer; 'but his friend told him at the Museum that all had failed and that they considered Hugh's undertaking hopeless.'

I confess I like to think of Hugh in the British Museum.

But in the meantime his money had given out. So he went back to Haworth. Emily was dead and Anne dying, but

'she threw her slender arms round his neck and called him her noble uncle. . . . Charlotte took him for a walk on the moor, asked him a thousand questions, told him about Emily and Branwell and, slipping a few sovereigns into his hand, advised him to hasten home.'

It is sad to read that no welcome awaited him at home because of his failure. Dr. Wright personally knew this Hugh Brontë and explains :

'For prudential reasons Hugh's mission was at first kept secret, and after its failure pride would not permit a reference to it. The adventure was known only to Mr. McKee and the brothers and sisters at home. Those who were not at home never heard of it.'

Plenty of other tales were to be picked up concerning 'noble uncle' Hugh Brontë. Dr. Wright gives a picture of him during the national potato blight, standing hurling his rotten potatoes down a cliff in the glen below the farm while he roared at the Devil to come and eat his own food. For years afterwards the place went by the name of The Devil's Dining-room. Perhaps it does still.

This glen, known as the Brontë Glen, had a bad reputation. A woman had been murdered there by her lover and betrayer.

The Glen was haunted by a horse with a headless rider. Dr. Wright always heard that 'the Giant' Brontë had fought a personal contest with the ghost and been worsted and obliged to make a pact with it. On dark nights when there were wailings in the Glen and people covered their heads in bed, Hugh went out 'to soothe the ghost' so that the wailing died away.

'On several occasions it was believed that Hugh was actually seen in the Glen, standing with his hand on the mane of a magnificent black horse, but when any neighbour drew near, the black horse dwindled to a great black cat which kept purring around Brontë and rubbing itself against his legs.'

In his investigations Dr. Wright was warned to have nothing to do with the Brontës. They were feared. If true this one fact is very strange, and challenging to speculation.

Hugh Brontë died, following 'a terrific squeeze' from the ghost of a man who had hanged himself in the married sister's house. What seemed more surprising to Dr. Wright's informant was that the dying Hugh forbade any whiskey to be drunk at his wake, and threatened, if disobeyed, to come back and blast the mourners.

William Brontë had six sons, 'all of whom got on well in life.' Welsh, inexplicably named after the family's evil genius, had two sons, of whom one was drowned and the other died 'after a swift career of debauchery, compared with which Branwell's vices sink into insignificance.'

'There are,' Dr. Wright concludes this genealogical survey, 'now in Ireland a number of the descendants of the Brontës, who are industrious, prosperous, and in every way most exemplary.'

'There are two or three in a destitute condition.'



*MY UNCLE THE DEVIL.*

BY E. K. WOOLNER.

THERE was a man who pawned his soul to the Devil, for ten thousand pounds, redeemable in ten years' time, on the first Friday in November.

'You might just as well let me have it outright,' said the Devil, 'and I'll make it eleven.'

'I wouldn't dream of such a thing,' said the man, profoundly shocked.

Now for five years, the man prospered and he doubled and trebled his money. Then the luck turned, and by the end of the ten years he had little more than the original ten thousand left, and he debated with himself what he should do.

'For after all,' he reflected, 'I have got on well enough without a soul all these years. On the other hand, I am not so young as I was, and it's as well to be prepared and look ahead.' And when he looked ahead he began to be afraid.

So the man sold out his investments, and as he intelligently realised that a cheque might not be acceptable, nor paper money either, he bought diamonds to the value of ten thousand pounds and took them away in a little leather bag ; and he went to the address which the Devil had given him, down near the river.

The Devil expressed surprise and pleasure at seeing him again. He accepted the diamonds and wrote out a receipt, and he disentangled the man's soul from a heap of junk in the window.

‘My God!’ said the man when he saw it. ‘Is *that* my soul?’

‘Don’t swear!’ said the Devil sharply. ‘I don’t like it. Yes, it’s yours. There’s your name in the top left-hand corner.’

‘But it’s all over holes,’ complained the man.

‘That’s the moth,’ said the Devil. ‘And of course it’s shrunk a bit for want of use—and it’s got a trifle mouldy—but in ten years what could you expect?’

‘You haven’t taken proper care of it!’ cried the man angrily.

‘I never promised to take care of it,’ said the Devil. ‘And I’ll thank you to remove it: I don’t like the smell.’ And the man found himself outside on the Embankment, with his soul in his hand.

It was thin and light, and riddled with holes like a skeleton leaf, and before he had decided what to do with it, the wind flipped it out of his hand into the river.

It touched the water with a flash, like a wisp of burning paper, and disappeared.

‘That was a shocking waste of money!’ said the man.

*FINNMARK.*

BY DAVID HOWARTH.

AFTER four days of the leisurely journey by the mail-boat up the coast of Norway we landed at Honningsvåg, the most northerly town, as its inhabitants will tell you, in the world. There was the Major, a surveyor for the Norwegian Government; Arne and Henrik, his assistants, blond northerners both twenty-one years old; and myself, an Englishman, and only different from any other tourist in that I understood a little of the language.

All Norwegians are so friendly that a new traveller in their country imagines he has some peculiar charm; but the cause of their kindness is not in his virtue but in theirs. The Major and I met in a train near Oslo. I told him I was going north, with no plans but to walk over somewhere into Sweden, because, as I said, that was so different from my working life in London. He was going north on business, he replied; and when I asked him what business called him into such remoteness, he told me he would make a map of the interior of Finnmark. This is the most northern province of Norway. On ten minutes' acquaintance he invited me to go to Finnmark with him; I could improve his English and he my Norwegian, he explained.

Our district was to be beyond the head of Laksefjord, between it and the Tana river, which forms the Finnish frontier there. From the northern coast of Norway three fjords run forty miles inland: Porsangerfjord, Laksefjord and Tanafjord; and south of them are fifty miles of lakes

and fells, uninhabited and barren, and visited by no one but from time to time the Lapps who tend the wandering herds of reindeer. The eastern end of this country has been mapped, but the centre and the west are unsurveyed, except for half a dozen cairns which were built on hilltops thirty years ago. It seemed, I thought, the very place for me. In summer, as a Londoner, I wanted to be quiet, and to travel by the simplest, slowest means.

I had another reason for wanting to join the Major. When I am abroad I hate to be taken for a tourist, and particularly for an English one. This is partly a form of snobbishness, but partly, I think, quite rational. It is impossible for a tourist to have much normal intercourse with the people whose country he has gone to see; and the pleasure of travelling, to my mind, lies mainly in sharing the ordinary life of foreign people, and being accepted by them as a friend. As one of the Major's party I would have some reason, beyond mere curiosity, for travelling to Finnmark. Moreover, one of the things which labels a person as a tourist is the way he spends his money. He has to live in an hotel, and feed in restaurants, and he may buy souvenirs and go on sightseeing excursions; and the people who provide these things look upon him as peculiar and God-sent. But while I was with the Major I could always pay for things through him. One small event seemed like a symbol of promotion out of the class of tourist. A friendly steward on the mail-boat shared my dislike of tourists who have too much money to spend, and when we left the ship at Honningsvåg, he refused my tip and gave me a packet of his favourite cigarettes instead. Then I began to feel at home in Norway.

At Honningsvåg we piled our luggage on the quay cheerfully, because we were glad to be so near our journey's end.

From there to Laksefjord's end is only a day's run in the local boat, which goes in each direction once a week. There was nearly a ton of gear ; the instruments, and clothes and tents, food for three months, and many gadgets of the Major's own invention. It made quite an imposing pile in that little harbour below the wooden houses built on ledges scraped by manual labour in the bare hillside. The crowd of people who had gathered to see the steamer off regarded us with interest. 'We are the Norwegian Geographical Bureau,' I told them when they asked me. They were impressed ; and I, being used to feel inferior as a tourist, was a little proud.

The mail-boat which had brought us rang its bell three times, and drew away, leaving the unexpected void and silence which a ship will always cause for those who watch it sailing from the dockside. But soon afterwards we found the local boat had gone, and left us stranded.

The Major and I sat down on upturned boxes to think that over. He was longing to get to his camping place, I knew, and I did not much want to spend four days of my summer holiday in Honningsvåg. So I went with him to try to hire a fishing boat ; but we both were afraid that we could not afford it.

But luck was with us ; for beyond the wharf a small grey Diesel ship was anchored. She had the build of a whaler, but no crow's nest on her mast and no harpoon gun in the bows ; we thought she was too neat and smartly painted. *Myken* was her name. We hailed some men on board ; they said she was 'the Government's Harbour Inspection Ship.' We glanced at one another, hopeful once again. The Major asked them, as one Government department to another, if they could help us out ; and they replied that certainly we should sleep the night on board, and that

the evening after they would have us all in Laksefjord. 'You see,' the Major said to me, 'everything comes right if only you can take things calmly.'

As *Myken* slowly cruised along the fjord we watched the coastline shift and slip astern ; a sight familiar to us all, but one which we saw now with new interest, because these were the hills where we were going to live.

At first sight they were not hospitable. They rose to fifteen hundred feet or so, declining in the south to low fells of a thousand feet or less. The sun, which had not left our sight for four days and four arctic summer nights, was in the west, and rain clouds drove across it, dividing up the scene with slanting lines of rain and sunshine. In the distance, where horizons are all blue and all hills two-dimensional, the country looked like many Scottish sea lochs I have seen ; but closer, when the sunlight struck the shoulder of a hill, I saw that it was different. These hills were made of stone, and stood as bare as the façade of a city street ; only in the hollows was there any greenness, of bilberries and stunted silver birch.

In the evening, about nine o'clock, we saw the water's end. This was to be our base. The place's name was Kones ; there were two wooden huts. There, the Major told me, we ought to meet our Lappish horseman. This man had not known when he might expect us, whether that week or the next (but that is nothing in that country, where, when they miss a boat, they wait a week beside the landing-stage as if it were ten minutes for a 'bus). But the appearance of *Myken*, the only event, I suppose, of this year in Laksefjord, soon caused a stir ashore, and after a time a boat put out to meet us. Two Lapps were in it, a man and a woman. They waved their hands and introduced them-

selves—the horseman and his wife. So far so good, we thought ; he's here at any rate. And we all looked with interest at the little man bobbing in the boat below, because so much depends upon the horseman in an expedition to that country. A good man would be our fisherman and guide, an elder brother with his local knowledge and a Father Christmas with his weekly mail ; but a bad one (for the Lapps are independent people) might feel ill-used or bored and leave us and our luggage stranded. In either case, we would have to live in close companionship with him, because there is no racial snobbishness about Norwegians, and their attitude towards the Lapps is always in sharp contrast to our treatment of the subject races of our Empire. But this man with his grin looked reassuring, and his greeting was in good Norwegian—an advantage, since the Lappish language is extremely difficult.

We started to unload our gear into his boat. Crate after crate went in, on *Myken's* big hydraulic winch. The quantity to me seemed huge, but he went on piling up the boxes, and his grin did not show any signs of fading. I felt it was a test—perhaps he did too. He passed it anyhow, for when the gunwales were an inch above the water and he and his wife crouched bailing in the bows, he still refused to go without my rucksack. We followed him ashore in *Myken's* boat, already sure that we were fortunate ; and as the two boats crunched against the shingle, a mist rose suddenly from the land. The mist was mosquitoes.

While all the others, with a lot of splashing, were carrying the boxes up the beach, I as the guest had time to look around, both at the country and our new acquaintances. The geography of Laksefjord end was strange. The ice age is a recent bit of history in Finnmark ; in fact in many places it looks as if the ice-cap melted yesterday. In Kones its effects

were very clear. It is well known that as the Scandinavian ice retreated, the continent, relieved of so much weight, floated higher in the viscous rock which underlies it, so that one often sees a sea-beach lying high and dry along a hillside. But at Kones there were seven beaches, complete with sand and shingle (almost seaweed) at intervals all up the hills. The top ones were above the tree-line ; this is about one hundred feet above the sea. In the middle a few were covered with the scrub of silver birch which passes for a forest at that latitude. The bottom one of all, though, was peculiar. Its level surface was quite bare, of sand and stones, with shallow pits scoured by ocean tides ; it extended for a square mile or so, with sloping edges thirty feet in height, so neat and regular that they looked artificial—simply the sea-bottom, unaltered by its contact with the air.

Two large rivers, called Adamsjokka and Storelven, flowed into Laksefjord, and their mouths gave further indication that the last movement of the continent was not so long ago. Both, in size and character, were rather like the Spey. Storelven cut the beaches where they were of sand, and since the last was formed had worn it back about two miles, to where a rib of rock had held up the erosion. But Adamsjokka crossed them on rock ; erosion at its mouth had hardly started, and the river fell for thirty feet or more direct into the sea. The Major was the first to realise what that meant ; our camps would be among the upper waters of these rivers. There would be no salmon ! It was a blow to him. To spend three months among a thousand streams and lakes which no other angler had visited was nearly all, I think, that he would ask of life. But now there was an imperfection in his paradise ; and I was glad for his sake when the horseman told us that in all the waters there were many trout.



Talk about trout made necessary my formal introduction to the horseman. We introduced ourselves, in the Norwegian way. 'Per Holm Pedersen,' he said, with the suspicion of a bow ; and I, 'Darvid Ho-art,' for in Norway I have given up pronouncing my name correctly. We stared at one another frankly ; he was a novelty to me and I to him. He wore the Lappish dress ; a long coat, trimmed with red and yellow braid, and leather leggings joined by thongs to boots of reindeer hide, with turned-up pointed toes. He wore his belt not round his waist, but loosely round his hips, which made him look all body and no leg, like a gnome. I found that this appearance was well suited to his character. They seemed strange clothes, but mine were even stranger ; old ski-ing trousers, once-white socks, and shoes—my lower half was all Norwegian. But above that was a shirt from Regent Street and a fisherman's jersey bought in St. Andrew's Dock in Hull. I was the foreigner all right ; Per was correctly dressed and was at home.

We soon discovered a fundamental quality in Per. There was nothing, within the conceivable duties of a horseman, which he would admit he could not do ; but we found his boasts were never empty. We always took him at his word, and he succeeded in doing many jobs we thought impossible. But on the other hand, if we should ask whether he thought *we* could do a thing, he was in doubt, and answered 'Kanskje det'—perhaps you might.

But I believe that is a habit common to all Lapps. Are there any other people in the world whose ordinary statements are literally accurate, and who simply do not understand the normal looseness of a civilised remark ? The Major told me of a horseman he had had before. This man had had a gun, and the Major asked him if he would shoot a reindeer for them if he saw one. 'You Norwegians

are so strange,' the Lapp replied ; ' if I see one I shall try to shoot it ; but who can tell you if I shall succeed ? ' And Per was just the same. Within his knowledge he was quite dogmatic, but outside it he would never venture an opinion. He knew his own abilities, but had no experience of ours. When I was used to this, it seemed a pleasant change from ordinary conversation ; for a ' good talker ' in civilised society must express opinions on far more subjects than a single mind can really understand. And thus our conversation is so wide in scope that it cannot be based on proper knowledge ; but Per's was extremely narrow, and exact.

While we pitched our tents I had my first experience of mosquitoes. I do not know what all these creatures live on. While we were there, the mosquitoes ate us, we ate the trout, and the trout ate the mosquitoes. But when the Norwegians are not conducting a survey it is hard to imagine what supports a population of many hundreds of insects to each square foot of country. The top speed of a mosquito seemed to be about six knots, so that when there was a good wind, or by walking briskly, we could outwit them and relax. In still air and sheltered places they covered us from head to foot, so that from a distance all our clothes were toned down in colour to mosquito-grey, and from close at hand we saw each other's bodies seething with enthusiastic life. The Lapps, though used to them, were not immune ; one old man had a gesture which swept them off his face and neck, and he continued in this habit even when there was a wind and no mosquitoes could be seen. I was fairly well equipped for them, and was amused to sit and watch them hunting, sounding with their noses every lace-hole in my boots. But it is impossible to move about for long in mosquito-proof clothing, and in the end I became resigned to being bitten.

The horses suffer most. It is said that they are killed by flies in some Finnmark summers, but whether this is due to poisoning or because the bites go septic, I do not know ; or whether irritation drives them to destroy themselves. On still evenings, Per would light a fire underneath his horse, and the sensible animal would stand all night singeing its belly in content ; but even so, one morning we found the side of its head was almost raw.

Our tents were proof against them when we did them up from inside, but when we left them empty they would soon fill up. Before we went to sleep we spent half an hour or so in slaughter. Mosquitoes brought out all the worst in my character. A well-aimed swipe would do for half a dozen, and gave me a cruel satisfaction ; and my last action when I went to sleep was to sweep away with vindictive pleasure the corpses which had fallen in my bed.

The morning after our arrival Per was to take a load of food and tents to our first camping place, some twelve miles up into the hills, and while he did so we went fishing. We asked him, in our innocence, if we could get a salmon in Storelven, in the pools below the fall. He, in his usual manner, said that there were salmon there, and that he couldn't say if we could catch them. We fished all day and all his doubts were justified. (My own fishing is not up to much. I never cast expecting I shall catch anything, but good fishermen are always surprised if they do not.) But it was a good and energetic day, and I returned to camp pleased with myself and ready for more sleep. Then Per came back. The Major asked him if he and his horse were ready for another journey. 'Of course we are,' said Per. 'Then let us start at nine,' the Major said.

Those twelve miles were the longest I have known. Moved by some latent patriotic urge, I was determined

that my three Norwegian friends should not outdo me. But I admit to being pleased when once the horse fell in a bog and we had to drop our rucksacks to unload it. Per seemed to lead us over all the hills, instead of along the valleys, and I was reminded of those military roads of General Wade's in Scotland which have the same strange tendency. But Per was right, as usual ; the drainage of Finnmark, made by ice, is so irregular that it is best to cross the country in as straight a line as possible ; the mountaineer's technique of 'contouring' is not worth while.

It was exactly midnight when at last we reached the camp, beside a lake called Roksbaktjavrr, which glittered in the Arctic sun. I was glad I had kept up with the Norwegians. But while we pitched the tents I happened to pick up their rucksacks, which contained surveying instruments ; they were quite twice as heavy as my own. By two o'clock that morning we were ready for our dinner ; and it was as I helped to cook that meal that Henrik startled me with a remark in English. He watched me light a Primus in a billowing cloud of mosquitoes and other flies, and said 'Hell-kitchen.' I asked him where he had got that expression from, and he explained that he had got a brother who had spent three weeks in London University.

. . . . .  
There have been many places which have cast a spell on me, filled me with energy or made me want to paint or write a poem ; there are others in which I want to end my days. The spell of Roksbaktjavrr was a different one. It was a simple place, of clean rock and crystal water, with something of the cold purity of ice in its appearance ; inhuman and yet friendly ; undecorated by nature or by man, and yet with a subtle and unchanging beauty, which seemed the antithesis of every form of art. Time drifted by those quiet hills, a

slow stream after the torrent of London days. There were no passing events to mark its speed like floating debris on its surface. Nothing divided up the days or hours ; there was no darkness, nor the conventions which follow alternate night and day. Sometimes my mind would jump the three weeks or the miles to home : the sun is over Stalogaissa, so it's time for morning coffee ; or it's hidden behind UËaskaidda, so they will be in bed in England now. But our criteria there were different : the light's too bright for fishing, so we'd better go to sleep. The surveyors would work from one hilltop to another till exhaustion drove them back to camp—thirty-six hours perhaps, and then a gargantuan meal and twelve hours' sleep—a meal which could not be identified as breakfast, say, or dinner, because it might happen at any hour, and would always be the same in character : trout, boiled potatoes, bread and margarine, and perhaps a sweet soup made from saft and sorrel. And I was lazy while the others worked. I had a favourite tarn high on the hill where I lay in the wind and sun, and took pleasure in the luxury of having no time limit to my thoughts. I had no quick decisions I must make, no job to finish before the evening ; and I felt that if I lay there long the answer to all my problems would drift unsought into my mind. I sometimes lay inactive while the sun traced its full circle in the sky, and only the birds, friendly and curious, came to stare at me. And at the end, a day had gone, and I had done nothing to mark it from another ; yet it was marked, stood out from London days, because at the end I felt myself wiser, and a little more at peace. In this mood I could face my disappointments, fears and jealousies, and order them away ; even ambitions would take their proper places in my mind. All men who are too civilized imagine to themselves this pleasure ; but solitude is very hard to find. I can remember

Finnmark now, when I find myself in trouble with my life, and think that in its silence I perceived a slow and calm philosophy.

One day when I was sitting by my tarn, I worked out backwards my journey home. I had to be in Denmark on the 10th. The train through Sweden ought to take two days—and add a day in Stockholm to collect my luggage. Then the 'bus through Finland: five hundred kilometres: that would take a day. A boat across the lake at Svanvik, and the 'bus from Kirkenes. And then the boat from Vadsö across Varangerfjord. I added it all up, counting an extra day to meet emergencies. It brought me to a Friday. My God! I thought, and flung my clothes on. It was Monday night. And the mail-boat didn't go to Kirkenes on Fridays. I had two days to do the hundred miles to Vadsö.

Back in the camp I had a talk with Per. There were three ways I could go. Thirty miles north-east would bring me up to Ifjord, and the map showed a road of sorts which ran east and south from there, and crossed the Tana river by a ferry called Seida. I knew there was a weekly car, but Per thought it went on Mondays. That was no good. Or I might walk south-east, striking the Tana after forty-five miles near the settlement of Sirma, Per's home town. There was a mail-boat on the river: but it went on Thursdays. Thirdly, east-south-east would lead directly to the ferry. 'Could I do it in a day and a half?' I asked him. 'Kanskje det,' he said; but so doubtfully that I decided then and there to try it.

I spent an hour looking at the map of the next sector to the east, which I should have to cross. The rivers all ran south and then turned north, and there were many lakes,

and areas with little tufts of grass denoting bogs. The only hope, I thought, would be to follow a watershed which ran quite reasonably straight, beginning at a hill called Höiryggen. According to the map this hill had got a cairn on top. To get there I must cross some thirty miles of unmapped country, which was complicated by the fact that I did not know where I was to start with. But I decided that south-east ought to hit it off, and went to bed. It would be nearly eighty miles to the ferry.

At nine o'clock on Tuesday morning I said good-bye, and thanked the Major, Arne, Henrik and Per for their hospitality. I was embarrassed ; they had been so kind to me. Then I put on my rucksack and a satchel full of maps and cameras, skirted the lake, and set off at a tangent to its shore on my first compass bearing.

This first bearing was a long one, because from just above our camp we could see perhaps ten miles to a shoulder which, for Finnmark, ended in a very steep buttress which I couldn't miss. I waded two rivers, waist-deep, and wondered what would happen to my rucksack if I came to one I had to swim. The sun was hot, and the bare rocks raised shimmering columns in the air ; but I was able to take off most of my clothes, because the wind was in my face, so that if I walked quickly the usual cloud of jubilant mosquitoes could not catch me up. By the sun it was nearly noon when I reached the shoulder, and climbing it saw another ten miles of country new to me, barren and rolling as the part which I had crossed.

But after I descended, I found the little hills were steeper, and the valleys so marshy, that I could not cross them directly. I had to take a bearing every time I reached a ridge, and memorise a landmark on the next. Each time I stopped to read my compass, there was a stirring in the rocks,

and a crescendo in a high-pitched hum, as the good news was spread among the flies. Mosquitoes are good things to keep a lazy man on the move, and I did not rest, but walked on with that intense concentration on each step which becomes a habit in rough country. There were no incidents ; the land was all the same, and I found it difficult to imagine that it had a boundary, or that if I kept on I should in time see a river that was wider, or a mountain different from the rest. In time I climbed the tenth, or perhaps the hundredth hill, and saw a lake ; the thousandth lake it must have been. But it was larger than most ; I judged it a mile wide, and I could not see to the end of it. Beyond, the hills were very regular, the skyline broken by no valleys and no peaks. The watershed at last, I thought ; and as I looked along it, exactly opposite I saw a little rise, and on its top a cairn. Höiryggen ! and what perfect navigation, I said in pride.

Well satisfied, I stopped to have some food, and as I sat eating by the lakeside, I realized that I had never been so utterly alone. Adventurers and savages must be quite used to this, but as the hills and sky stared down at me, I was acutely conscious of being the only thing alive within their wide view, and through my aliveness of being most conspicuous. It was safe to say there were no men within thirty miles ; I was told there were wolves and reindeer, but I had seen nothing moving except the birds and flies and fishes. Now is the time, I thought, for God to strike me down, without the dreary publicity which such a miracle would cause in London. No one would miss me for a long time and the stricken corpse would never be found again. But no thunderbolt disturbed the unchanging blueness, and if the hills shifted a little, it was no more than the false shifting of the mirage. I thought God must have better plans, for I was sure that I deserved it.



The climb to Höiryggen was long and tedious, up a dark corrie, made sinister by the despairing cries of Lapland bunting, which pursued me for mile after mile. Near the top a skua saw me and came to hover a dozen feet above my head ; then he went away, only to return with all his pals, who swooped down at my head while I shouted English curses at them. The attitude of most birds was that of the people who watch workmen digging holes in roads, contemplative and mildly inquisitive ; but the skuas were street-urchins with their rude gestures and ribald cries. I took a great dislike to them, calling them sissy seagulls and other vulgar names.

Soon after this encounter I reached the top, a little out of breath, not from the climb but from my altercation with the birds. But then my pride in navigation fell. The cairn was only a rock, stuck up on end, and this was no more Höiryggen than any other hill. The watershed as well, which seemed so definite from down below, turned out to be an area of stagnant lakes and marshes of which I could see no end. Sadly I threaded my way among them ; and in time I saw another hill, with a bigger and better cairn, lying away to my right ; and coming to a rise I saw at length the country sloping away from me, and rivers undeniably running down to Tana.

Now, I thought, I must be on the map ; and with one eye on the skuas, who were still showing interest in what I was doing, I spread it on a rock and tried to identify the points in the featureless view. It all seemed to fit ; a range of hills to the south hid the Tana valley, and between myself and them was an enormous marsh. A river called Höiryggelven flowed through it, and I could see its head-waters below me. To the east was the watershed which I proposed to follow, quite well defined. The only item unac-

countable was a large lake, which was not on the map at all ; but, I thought, it was quite possible in such a new topography that it had formed since that area had been surveyed, and, intending to write and tell the Major that his map was not much use, I started off along the watershed.

This was my second shock. What looked as firm as downland turf was a floating mass of peat, which, after supporting my weight for a dozen hurried paces, gave way and left me, feeling rather foolish, with only my top half visible. The skuas were delighted, but I was not amused, and, seeing that the ridge was all like that, I tried a traverse along its southern slope.

There there was a new hazard in what was becoming a ridiculous sort of obstacle race. This side of the hills was made of glacial sand which gave good going on the level, where its surface was matted with bilberries. But each stream had worn a channel like a railway cutting, with the sand on each side lying loosely at its angle of rest. Going down these was fun. I jumped, and finished at the bottom with my head and shoulders projecting from a sand-castle. But going up again was not so easy, and finally I jumped down one twenty or thirty feet deep, and could not get out again.

By then I was a little desperate. I had been going for twelve hours, and realised that to cross thirty miles of such a drainage system within the next day and night was quite impossible. The only hope was to follow the rivers down to Tana. I reckoned that the railway cutting I was in was one of the tributaries of Höiryggelven, and thought that ten miles or so along it would bring me to a certain bend in Tana, from which it would be thirty to the ferry.

So I swallowed my pride and set off along the stream. Thereafter the nightmare quality of this journey steadily

increased. First the stream itself upset my calculations by turning north-east ; but I put that down to some local formation, and leaving it to its whim, fell back upon my compass once again. That led me into a thicket of tangled bushes ; and having got into this I had to cut my way out with a knife, only to find another bog which I crossed at a run, jumping hurriedly from tuft to tuft, because if I stood still the ground around me gently sank below the water. Next there was an area of large pits like shell-holes with no surface drainage at all ; and then a long and narrow lake which was too deep to wade. Finally, when I reached the valley through which I thought the river ought to run, I found the merest trickle of a stream, which ran exactly in the wrong direction.

More calculations with the map made me try another valley three or four miles to the east, but that also proved to be a corrie of which the stream ran out towards me. And it was not till then that I realised for certain that my premises had been all wrong. I'd never seen Höiryggen, or been near it. In fact, I wasn't on the map at all.

As I thought about this melancholy fact, I was assaulted by a buzzard, and, being in no mood for trifling, used the map to beat the creature off. I also took a bearing on the sun. I found that it was very nearly midnight.

So there was nothing for it but to cross the ridge which hid the Tana river. It was only about a thousand feet above the valley floor, but I did not feel much inclined for climbing. I reached the top refreshed by seeing all the skuas set upon the buzzard, and torment him as he and they had both tormented me. But there was no Tana river, only another valley and another ridge. And it was not for four or five more hours of steady going that I saw a valley deep and wooded, and knew that it must be the one I wanted. As

soon as I was satisfied that the hills across the way were Finland, I lay down and went to sleep, and dreamed that wolves surrounded me and watched me.

After an hour I woke up feeling better, and made some coffee and then started off again. Even after Tana was in sight it seemed a long time before it got appreciably nearer. I walked into a wood which, growing thicker as I descended from the hills, obscured the view, so that I had to rummage for the compass in my rucksack, where I had put it, as I thought, once and for all. I hurried on among the birches. They were so rotten that whole small trees would fall down as I passed. And when I thought that I would never find this most elusive river, I plunged into another clump of bushes and nearly fell into the water, twenty feet below an overhanging bank.

It was a broad, complacent stream. Finland, which looked much the same as Norway, lay beyond, separated from me by the width of London river in the city. Looking along the bank I saw some huts—a surprising number of them—salmon nets spread out to dry, and among the trees a flagstaff. Farther along, there were two men in a canoe. The flagstaff puzzled me. There was only one place on Tana which could have a flagstaff: the school at Sirma, where Per had wanted me to go. The truth dawned slowly on my mind. Goodness knows how I got there; but I was at Sirma after all. I had walked at least ten miles due east at different stages of my journey, and there I was, still ten miles west of where I ought to be. And that ten miles I still had got to go, making it all of forty to the ferry. My will began to weaken as I watched the men in their canoe. It seemed to take them all their time, with two oars and a paddle, to prevent themselves from being swept downstream; and the idea of sitting in a boat drifting with the

river appealed to me much more than walking down the bank.

So I made my way towards them. By the time I was in hailing distance I would have given them a fortune for that boat.

Of course they were most friendly ; but they frankly disbelieved my story, which was flattering. They said it was eight or nine miles by the way I said I came—a Norwegian mile being seven of the English sort. (Later from the small-scale maps I reckoned I had covered sixty miles before I went to sleep.) But what troubled them was not the distance, which was not excessive as a day's walk for a Lapp, but the problem of how I had found my way. They knew about compasses, but didn't really think them any use, and would never, I am sure, have trusted to anything except their local knowledge and their instinct to enable them to cross the hills themselves. But then I mentioned Per. His name was like a password. 'Nils Pedersen,' the elder of the two men said, and 'Darvid Ho-art,' I replied. 'This is my son,' he added, 'and Per Holm is my brother. Be so good as to take some coffee with us.' 'You are very kind,' I said, risking a snub by using the familiar second person singular ; but the ice was broken, and he seized my rucksack and carried it to his hut, bombarding me with questions as we walked. More of the family joined us : Nils's daughter, who was ten and since her mother's death did all the housework, and his nephew Isaak, who was a cripple ; and a very old lady, perhaps his mother, who hobbled in to shake my hand. So I lived in London ? 'Fancy coming all the way to Finnmark when you live in London !' 'It is a big city, is it not ?' But how to describe to them its bigness, its streets in thousands and its men in millions ? Or to explain what made me leave it

to come to Sirma to a little Lappish hut? Isaak would like to go to London, to see life, 'for nothing ever happens here in Sirma.' A line of Flecker came into my mind: 'Men are unwise and curiously planned.' I tried to translate it, but Isaak was a young man, and Nils was happy and was therefore not unwise. Perhaps the old lady understood me. She said nothing, but followed the conversation with her eyes, which were vital in the immobile oldness of her face.

For a moment then, as at many other times, the thought flickered in my mind that I need never go to London any more. With my reason caught unguarded for a moment, the idea attracted me. But that is ground I have fought over, and like most town people, I know that a simple life is only a dream for me, and its enjoyment a delusion. So I led our conversation, away from the edge of metaphysics, to canoes. I did not need to offer them a fortune for their boat, or for Isaak, to help me and to bring it back. But the little I did offer put a barrier between us. When I was walking, my education, and the comparative riches which it earned me, were of no use to me and gave me no advantage over the Lapps. I was their equal. But, though their farewell was friendly, and they asked me to return, I felt my money exiled me from Finnmark. Once more I was a tourist; a Londoner of middle class, incongruous on Tana.

## MORNING IN LATE JUNE.

Now dimly steals the light from out the East.  
 The honeysuckle and the new-mown hay,  
 Old-fashioned roses and the spiced pink  
 Give forth their fragrance as I deeply drink  
 The night-cool air. Now sleeping bird and beast  
 Stir as they sense the soft approach of day.

First in the crescent light trills out the lark  
 Who from his airy height perceives the sun :  
 Then from the orchard comes the robin's cry.  
 A clarion challenge from the farm near by  
 Is answered distantly. A sheep-dog's bark  
 Tells that the shepherd's work is well begun.

There is a sense of promise in the air—  
 Sable the trees and hedges 'gainst the sky,  
 Where dove-grey clouds above the distant hills  
 Contrast the pink-vermilion light, that fills  
 The eastern stretches of the heavens, where  
 Lonely and pale a single star doth lie.

Above the Forest's trees the moon still shines  
 Unnaturally bright as comes the day,  
 Whose light seems every moment to increase.  
 But who shall say 'Lo, here the night doth cease  
 And day begins' ? Nay, each with each combines  
 And mingles with a subtle interplay.

Yet morn must have its way, and so the shrouds  
Of night disperse, and birds begin to stir—  
Rooks take their morning flight—the blackbird's notes  
Ring out, and from the Forest's shade there floats  
The stock-dove's plaint. Now, to the North, grey clouds  
Are turned to lilac and to lavender.

Nothing is stable in this hallowed hour—  
Change after coloured change enchants the eye.  
Clouds that were stratus-formed to cirrus turn—  
The orient sacrifice begins to burn—  
The dawn-wind breaths—devoutly every flower,  
Bowling, adores the Dayspring from on High.

FRANCKLYN HELMORE.

### SONG OF THE FOUR WINDS.

I am the grave-eyed wind  
That blows from the west corner of the earth.  
I hang the rainbow over the grey seas  
And scatter rain.  
Walking with slow feet in the topmost boughs  
Of dripping trees, I gaze into dark woods  
Where the damp shadows linger, and I go  
Over the flooded fields with dallying feet  
Spraying the lingering rain.



*I am the eager-mouthed wind  
That blows from the north corner of the earth,  
From the still ice, and the blue polar seas  
Grinding with ice.  
I come across dark mountains, and I burst  
With snow upon the yellow fields, and dive  
Into the chilly seas, heaping green waves  
Curling upon the shore, then blow white foam  
Like scattered cherry flowers to land.*

*I am the warm, slow wind,  
Dwelling among the orange trees, and leaning  
Over the cypress hills, in the cypress shade,  
Too slow to blow  
The lingering petals from the full-blown roses.  
Sliding through hot lime trees, sinking again  
To calm, warm pools, and there I fade at last  
Upon blue hills of thyme.*

*I am the earnest-eyed,  
The steely wind that shrieking from the east  
With acid mouth eats up spring's young-sapped leaves  
And burns the wheat.  
I bend the high-flowered grass, I toss the buds  
From high-tiered chestnut trees. Aching with cold  
I rush across the tawny steppes, and drive  
The yellow tartars and their small dun horses  
Before my shouting mouth.*

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH.

## SECOND WIFE.

BY NELL HANSON.

‘WILL ye have me, Margaret—like this, afther all them years?’

There had been no eagerness in Mick’s voice. Only weariness, and a kind of shame, it seemed to her. Afterwards, wounded by the memory, she had thought: ‘Maybe I’d have done betther to send him back where he came from.’ But at the time something up-welling, long repressed, engulfed her; swept her to him. ‘Afther all them years!’ she had repeated wistfully. He had not seemed to hear; or to feel her clinging arms and lips.

They were married quickly; one of the crowding Shrovetide couples. A strange pair in their self-contained stillness, in that young, eager, clamorously mating pack. Even as they stood before the altar, one part of her brain recorded mercilessly: ‘He’s not looked at ye once, since ye came into the chapel! There’s not wan time ye could swear that he kissed ye warm an’ of his own free will. Ye’re a fool, Margaret O’Malley, deludin’ yerself that he wants ye!’ Turn tail and run from the chapel before she committed an irrevocable blunder? Face life alone once more with that pride she had cherished and cosseted all these years? She couldn’t. The love and longing and loneliness of fifteen years held her body quiescent beside him; stilled for the moment the tortured questionings of her mind. Free at last, he had come to her as soon as decent custom allowed. If he didn’t want her, why had he come, she asked herself valiantly, surprised by the steadiness of her

own voice as she made her vows. She didn't slip her arm into his as they left the chapel. She walked along beside him, stolid, self-contained as he was.

After the wedding, he took her home to Kilbray. Strange to be there again, after fifteen years ! She stood at the door of the cabin, shading her eyes and staring away to Boher Cliff. Up there, in her warm, comely youth, she had wandered many an evening with Mick Hanrahan. Arms entwined and bodies still as they had been to-day in the little chapel, they had stood to listen to the roar and suck of the waves far below ; or lifted their faces to search for the tiny speck of a singing lark. His arms and his kiss had clung then as tenderly as her own.

She gave a little shudder and turned indoors. Up there, fifteen years ago, she had left him ; in anger. He had accused her . . . ' God help me, I mustn't be thinkin' o' that now ! ' she checked herself. She seized a broom and began to sweep the cabin floor.

She took the cups and saucers from the dresser to lay their supper, handling them awkwardly, a little fearfully as though they still belonged to the woman he had married. She rattled them, almost dropping one and startling Mick.

She said quickly : ' It's Kathleen knew the way to choose right ! It's pretty, this blue and white.'

She had never mentioned Kathleen since the day he had come to her and told her that she was dead. She had longed with a passionate curiosity to speak of her ; to know more of his marriage ; of those years—for him so full, for her so empty. The memory of Kathleen had been with her always ; of the slim graceful body and the fuzz of soft fair hair ; of the sea-blue eyes beneath their heavy drooping lids. Many a time, remembering, she had laughed to herself ironically, gazing into her mirror at her own broad commonplace face ;

passing her hands critically over her own strong breasts and ample hips. With her, always, the memory of the adoring look on Mick's face, the night she had come on him with Kathleen in his arms. That had been the very night after he had accused her, so monstrosly, up there on Boher Cliff; had accused her of a faithlessness of which she was incapable; had refused, icily, to accept her simple explanation. She had slipped away, unseen, unheard, as Mick's face bent to Kathleen's. And the next day she had left Kilbray.

She had corresponded with no one except her own mother, now dead. Deliberately, she had chosen to cut herself off. Beyond the bald information that Mick had married Kathleen a month after her departure, her mother had respected the pride that would ask no questions. And Margaret had scrubbed floors and cooked endless dinners in other people's houses, wondering how those white arms were serving the man she loved; wondering if that slim body had borne him the child she longed for.

Well, Kathleen had had no child. That fact had been included with those of her illness and death. Evidently Mick thought that necessary before asking her to marry him. Sensitiveness, a sense of uncertainty, a lack of assurance in the presence of this one-time sweetheart who had become so strange a lover, prevented any intimate questioning. Only acute nervousness now had forced Kathleen's name into the open.

A flush swept Mick's face. 'I'm not wantin' Kathleen mentioned between you an' me, Margaret,' he said.

Answering colour crept more slowly into her own. 'Oh very well, so!'

They conversed, like strangers, over supper. She was thankful when someone knocked loudly on the door. There was giggling and chatter outside. Mick got up slowly.

‘It’ll be some o’ the neighbours. Tim Foley must be afther tellin’ them, blast him. I thaht they mightn’t get wind of it, an’ no wan on the platform only himself when the train got in.’ His hands moved restlessly among the supper things. He didn’t turn to the door.

‘Will I let them in?’ She didn’t know what he wanted.

‘Ye will not! Not to-night. I couldn’t face them to-night.’ He flung out his arms in an odd gesture; appeal, it seemed to be. ‘To-morrow, maybe. To-morrow it’ll have to be, I suppose. They’d think it queer, a weddin’ wid no divarshion.’ He gave a nervous laugh.

Queer? Unheard of, in County Clare! There was no escaping it. And she didn’t want to escape. She’d be glad of diversion; glad of anything—of music, dancing, whiskey flowing freely and kindly welcoming talk; of anything that might fill for an hour or two that chasm that lay between herself and Mick.

‘To-morrow it’ll have to be,’ she said; and laughed the same nervous laugh.

Mick opened the half-door, and the sound of voices filled the cabin. A head was thrust over the lower door. She recognised the tousled hair, now greying, and the sharp, inquisitive features of Bridget Guinane. Other faces, strange and familiar, crowded the small opening. She bent her head, flushing. She wanted to hide from those kindly, curious eyes.

Bridget Guinane’s thin voice exclaimed: ‘Is it you, Mick? Are ye home then, an’ nobody seen ye? An’ Lord save us, if it isn’t Margaret O’Malley!’

Mick said nothing. The buzz of voices grew louder.

Bridget gave him a playful poke in the ribs. ‘Is it married ye are, Mick? Well, aren’t you the sly wan, staling a march on us all!’

Loud laughter. The crowding faces pressed closer. Margaret clasped her hands tightly together.

Mick said slowly : ' We were married this marnin' only.'

A woman's voice cried excitedly : ' The blessin' o' God on ye both ; an' on this house !'

Bridget pushed against the door. Mick's hand shot out to hold it fast.

' Och, Mick Hanrahan, will ye not let in yer friends ? Whoever heard of a weddin' an' no divarshion wid it !'

' To-morrow,' he said heavily. ' To-morrow yez can all come an' welcome. But there isn't a bite or a sup in the house ; an' we've come a long way since marnin'.'

' A long way !' Margaret thought. Weary miles of the spirit she had travelled, in those few hours since morning.

' Ah, go on wid yez ! Is it a cold bed ye're wantin', the two of yez ?' She thought she recognised the voice of Tim Foley, the station-master.

Mick said again dully : ' To-morrow, Tim. Will ye lave us be now, for the love o' God.'

Bridget Guinane drew back. ' All right, so—since ye're set it'll not be to-night. But it's a queer welcome that you an' herself does be givin' to yer old friends.'

' I'm not manin' it that way, Bridget. It was kind of yez all to come. Indeed it was.'

' Ah, God bless ye, Mick ! An' Margaret too.' Bridget's voice was warm again. ' She was a lovely gurl, so she was, God help her !'

Mick took a step forward. His voice was suddenly harsh. ' Will ye go now, all of yez, for the love o' Jesus !'

Was that it, then ? Her ageing body ? But he had surely seen . . .

He closed the half-door sharply. Voices and laughter faded down the hill.

He lit the candle. 'We'd betther be goin' to bed.' He held it while she searched for sheets in the cupboard by the fire. There was a sweet smell of lavender—Kathleen's lavender. She held the sheets against her breast, glancing up at him uncertainly. But she couldn't read his eyes.

They undressed silently. Strange to creep into that wide bed that almost filled the tiny inner room ; strange, remembering the day she had stood beside it long ago—the day he had bought it and told her it would be their marriage bed.

He lay beside her, silent ; made no movement towards her. She was dead inside. Dead. Dead. Without will. Without desire. They might have been two corpses, stretched there side by side. Only something still alive cried continually, piteously : 'Why did he ask me, God help me, if he didn't want me ?'

By the rigid stillness of his body, she knew that he also lay awake till morning.

She was glad she had to be busy all next day. She sent him to the shop for what they needed. She couldn't face inquisitive questions or kindly, well-meant good wishes. To-night would be all too soon. She talked with him as though he and she were chance acquaintances.

They came—twenty-three of them ; packing the tiny cabin ; overflowing into the drizzling rain. Songs and laughter and the familiar lilt of the Kilbray tongues, so long unheard and longed for, beat upon her heart until she felt that it must break. Mick moved about, carefully, unsmilingly attending to his neighbours' wants. Once she caught him looking at her strangely from a corner. But he never spoke one word to her.

Fiddles scraped and the dancers shuffled outside in the rain. Bridget Guinane drew her shawl and crept closer to the red turf. She laid a cold bony hand on Margaret's.

‘Me poor old bones is agein’, alanna ! Shure amn’t I the same age as yer mother herself, God rest her soul !’ And then : ‘What ails ye, Mick ? Is it shy ye are, or what—now ye’ve got the long wish o’ yer heart ?’ Mick moved away uneasily. She turned to Margaret again. The whiskey had loosened her tongue. ‘The long wish of his heart, alanna, an’ that’s gospel truth ! Shure he wasn’t two months married to that pretty face when he was breakin’ his heart for the wan he’d jilted ! Och, she knew it well, God help her ; an’ serve her right, sez I, for comin’ between the two of yez.’ Margaret’s heart was beating, wildly. ‘But what ails him at all ? Ye’d think ’twas a ghost he’d married !’

Mick said sharply : ‘Hould yer whisht, Bridget Guinane !’ and her heart stood still again. But in a moment she saw him bend to the old woman, helping her, with great gentleness, as she got up to say good-bye.

What had she done ? Why . . . ? Why . . . ?

The fiddles stopped their interminable scraping. The last drop of whiskey was drained. With slaps on the back and leering and laughter, the neighbours straggled away. They stood alone before the dying fire.

She must know the truth. Now. If it killed her.

‘Was that true, what Bridget Guinane is afther sayin’ ?’

He was looking at her strangely again. He didn’t speak.

She raised her hands, palms up, the fingers crooked in anguished supplication. ‘*Why* did you *ask* me ?’ she whispered. ‘*What* have I *done* ?’

His eyes opened wide. ‘*You* ? Not *you* ! It’s meself. The shame in me heart. . . . Ye’ll never know . . .’

What was he talking about ? She moved closer to him.

‘It’s wid me night an’ day . . . years an’ years now, since I came to me senses. An’ when I seen ye . . . the look of ye, Margaret—you wid yer youth all gone in



loneliness ! I thaht . . . I thaht . . .’ His hands were clenched. “ If I marry her I can make it up to her some-way.” I thaht the terrible shame would lave me then. But it lay between us, God help us, an’ I couldn’t spake of it.’

Her arms were round him ; but he stood rigid.

‘ I’d no right to marry you, an’ you not knowin’. That tale. It was all trumped up. She told it to me ; but I knew well it was a lie. But her pretty face ! God forgive me for the years o’ wretchedness I braht on ye. I wanted her. She was lovely, Margaret. An’ lovely to her dyin’ day, they do be sayin’ ; though I hated her. An’ the shame o’ what I done to ye, me little love . . .’

Her arms crept up to his stiffened neck. She drew his face to hers.

#### POT-POURRI.

*Mourn not the doom  
Of rose in bloom ;  
What need is there for sighing  
When, faint and sweet,  
It may repeat  
An echo in its dying ?*

*The petals fade  
And then are laid  
On altars of remembrance  
And thus again  
The rose shall reign,  
Though in a humbler semblance.*

RICHARD SEYMOUR.

[A volume of verse by Mr. Seymour entitled ‘ Rhyme Unreasoned ’ was published on June 17 by John Murray.]

## *A DUFFER IN PARADISE.*

### *SOME EXPERIENCES WITH RESERVOIR TROUT.*

BY H. R. JUKES.

RIVER anglers are apt to refer to a lake—or reservoir—as a ‘duffer’s paradise.’ Well, it might be so sometimes. I have known it otherwise.

I have fished one every day, or almost every day, for the past ten years. For the first five I kept a diary; thinking that the notes of weather, temperatures, flies—all those things one does put in a diary—would in time prove useful. In an incredibly wild flight of the imagination I thought that I should be able to refer back to it on any particular type of day, find out what flies had taken on some precisely similar one in the past, and then sally forth confidently armed with the correct lures. By this prescience I would confound my two companions. While they struggled on with their wasteful trial-and-error methods, I should start, straight away, catching fish.

As I say, I kept it for five years. Then I gave it up.

Luckily the reservoir was well stocked. Good days, like the little girl, were very, very good and the bad ones correspondingly horrid. The wide contrasts were astonishing. But both types were useful for experimental purposes. On a good day trout would be so plentiful that one could afford to indulge in genuine research. Only three of us fished it, 180 acres and full of trout up to four pounds, and none of us was of the type they call a ‘killer.’ On bad days one simply *had* to experiment; and experiment pretty thoroughly too.

Some of our efforts must have appeared decidedly novel to the trout, if any ever took much notice of them, which I doubt.

Our earlier methods were orthodox enough. The reservoir had been formed merely by throwing a dam across one part of a narrow valley and the water allowed to collect behind it. The two sides and top were left in their natural state. It was like a big pool on a river, and we fished it as such. As it gradually filled up, taking on more and more the semblance of a lake, we altered our flies accordingly. But still in the orthodox way; a little livelier pattern, perhaps, and a shade larger. Catalogues were studied—what did they use on Loch Leven? We went by what the books said and were content.

For a time!

The bad days began to grow more frequent. The water was rising fairly steadily and covering fresh ground. Doubtless the fish were feeding on the countless grubs and worms dislodged in this way. At all events, the ordinary flies, fished in the usual way—or perhaps I should say in *our* usual way—seemed unattractive. Frequent changes of pattern, too, proved unavailing. It was purely by accident that I found out what, for that time at least, was wrong.

Always we had ‘worked’ our flies a little; casting out and then drawing them towards us with sundry waggles of the rod top which were fondly presumed to give a lifelike movement to the lures. For three solid hours one night I had done this without response of any sort. Then, just as I was lifting my line clear for a fresh cast, I saw a sudden golden flash and a really heart-quickenning swirl. Naturally my flies, with the accelerated motion imparted to them by the action of picking the line off the surface for the backward cast, must have been almost swishing through the

water for the last couple of yards or so. It was while they were doing this that the fish came. Luckily I missed him. With the sudden application of force I had given to the rod at that particular moment a check would have been fatal.

Of course I cast for him again, shortening line, and drawing my flies gently over where he had been. No response ; and there could have been no cavil at the soft and delicate way I picked my line off this time. I made no disturbance whatever. A dozen times more I cast for him and then, with the remark customary to the occasion, I gave him up. Disgusted, I fished the last cast out and jerked, carelessly once more, the line clear. My three flies skittered splashily across the surface, creating as much disturbance as a bevy of young ducks. And once more I saw that quick golden gleam. He took the tail fly as it passed—I don't suppose he had time to reach the others, they were moving so fast—and the sudden shock bent the rod almost double. I was startled almost out of my wits ; but I got him. A good fish too, well over two pounds.

It took me quite a while to thoroughly learn the lesson. I would fish on and on, these bad days, in the old way until some similar incident happened and then I would remember. Sometimes I was reminded by a sudden pluck as my flies were trailing disconsolately behind me while I walked round some little bay ; a bay which, by the way, I would have fished out thoroughly during the preceding five minutes ; keeping down out of sight, dropping my flies gently, doing everything right. Then, when I had been walking carelessly and openly along the bank, with a dozen yards of line trailing loosely after me and the flies wagging about on the surface, a trout would rise, and actually hook himself.

But I learnt in time, and when orthodox methods failed I would often get fish after fish by fairly swishing my flies

through the water, jerking them here and there as fast as my line would allow me. I got further proof of the importance of this speed factor. Several times when I was actually playing a fish, while he was excitedly dashing about all over the place, a second trout would take one of the other flies and there would be two on at the same time. On four occasions I have actually got three.

Now those loose flies must have been moving very quickly indeed ; I myself must have been in full view ; and the water, what with the sundry leaps and rushes of the first fish, thoroughly disturbed.

It is worth trying, sometimes. Even after two thousand days of intimate contact with one particular lot of trout, I have to add that 'sometimes.'

I found the system worked occasionally with minnow, too. Some inanimate things are positively malignant, but surely there can be nothing quite so diabolic as a kinked spinning line ! However, I did once manage to acquire some slight control over an Illingworth reel and I put in a deal of work with it. For hours, some days, I would spin, gallantly fighting off a despair which steadily deepened, and then, one among a series of unpleasant incidents, my tail triangle would happen to catch up round the cast. The minnow would come skittering backwards way first along the top of the water, creating what seemed to me a remarkable disturbance for so small an object and leaving a wake behind it like a destroyer's. Into this wake would leap fish after fish, just missing the minnow, and all apparently wildly excited at the unusual phenomenon—nearly as excited as I was !

By fiddling about with the fins of my spinner I found that I could produce this eccentric movement intentionally. So when the orthodox underwater methods failed I used to

try this. It too worked, again sometimes. But I am convinced that on occasion I got fish when otherwise I should not have done so.

Apropos of spinning : I was very puzzled at one time at the number of 'plucks' I got underwater. They were just plucks, but quite firm and distinct and unmistakably from fish. The flights were never disturbed or the minnow apparently touched. I was at a loss to account for this until one day, in very clear water and fishing from a rather high bank where I could see well out, I actually saw a trout dash for and take one of the little swivels on my line, a full yard away up the cast from the minnow. The same savage pluck I had come to know so well was communicated up the line. Twice more, near the same place, though probably not by the same fish, I saw this happen and the mystery of my 'missed' fish was explained.

The same thing has happened with the tiny leaden weights sometimes affixed to the line to assist in casting. I have seen fish take these too. So it was a simple step, even for me, from this to making up a few lead devons, as small as possible. They worked as well as, I think better than, most other devons ; but in spite of plucks and everything, a natural dead minnow has paid best.

One gets these 'plucks' with fly, too ; though of course not by any means so distinctly felt. I found out what was happening there as well. The fish were rising at the fly, were suspicious, and to make sure they merely lipped the two or three long strands of feather which imitated the fly's tail and pulled the whole lot under to examine at their leisure. Of course the thin strands could not stand this sort of thing for long, and the result was that they were either pulled clean out or snapped off. Fly after fly I found had been thus maltreated. I fished them without tails, but

I soon discovered that these appendages were important. I got few rises to the mutilated imitations. Incidentally I might mention here that we all three found that bright yellow tails—yellow, not orange—proved far and away the most attractive, irrespective of what the actual pattern of fly was they were meant to adorn.

The most important thing I found out about flies was size. I got this information at second hand. Out of the thousand-odd Irish navvies employed on the construction of the reservoir it was only to be expected that one or two should know most of what there was to know about poaching. One of these likeable rascals—‘Sligo,’ they called him ; his proper names, which do not matter here, were more Irish still—was often to be seen sitting by the bankside on an evening. He would rise as I approached and shyly enter into conversation. His was a winning personality. He had the right word of sympathy just when it was wanted. ‘Faith, sorr,’ he would say in his delicately flavoured brogue, ‘but you nearly had ’um. He came short. Och no, ’twas not your honour’s fault at all at all. He came short, he did. ’Tis the devil.’ And this in spite of the rod having been almost jerked out of my hand ! A courteous race.

‘Sligo’ had apparently learnt all about infiltration methods. He wormed his way in inconspicuously. From occasional, and seemingly accidental encounters lasting but a minute or two, his visits grew in frequency until they had become a habit and I saw him almost every night. He never presumed, and was always there to help. He had an uncanny skill in unravelling tangled casts—and in those days I suffered much from tangled casts ; some of them looked like windswept cobwebs by the time I had done with them. But ‘Sligo,’ with sundry shakes and coaxings, would have

them right in no time. 'Tis the practice maybe I've had picking oakum,' he would explain with a grin as I congratulated him. 'Tis the devil.' Everything was 'the devil' with 'Sligo.'

We had a boat then ; a crazy old tub with only half one gunwhale and hardly any bottom. One had to bale after every half-dozen casts and, out alone, if one got busy with a two- or three-pounder which proved at all refractory—well, it was touch and go. It certainly added to the excitement, for the reservoir was 150 feet deep and the third of a mile across.

'Sligo' sometimes rowed. He did it very well, too. But when things were quiet, with no rises to be seen and I was perforce using what he called 'by guess and by God' methods, he would be apt to doze. Occasionally he would be roused by the sound of a fish leaping close to the boat and, with his eyes staring all about him, would yell excitedly, 'Strike 'um, strike 'um !' regardless of the fact that the strike had been made some time before. He would grin sheepishly at the discovery, and then suddenly finding the water over our ankles, begin to bale furiously. We used an enamel mug, holding about a pint, for the job, and in his agitation—'Sligo' could not swim at all—this new and pressing occupation would keep him busy until I had time to get my fish properly under some degree of what passed with me as control and ready for the net. 'Sligo' netted everything, big or little, with a whoop of triumph ; his great, splendid laugh reverberating across the water like a jovial thunderstorm. 'Och, 'tis the grand fish he is,' he would shout, 'the grand fish. He took the Pether Ross, he did. He rose twice at it ; I saw him. 'Tis the devil.'

Always he was on to me to use bigger flies. Usually I fished with sizes three and four, sometimes five or six.



'Sligo' scoffed at these. ' 'Tis bigger ones ye need, sorr, for the big chaps, bigger ones.' So I dressed some bigger ones, sizes eight and nine. These too he rather deprecated. And then, one evening, I came across a few old salmon flies. For a joke I stripped one and redressed it in his favourite hackle style. By the time I had finished it looked like the end of a flue-brush. But my joke fell flat. 'Sligo' was in ecstasies. 'That's the thing, sorr,' he cried, 'that's the thing. We'll put it on and we'll get some fish.'

We did too. The sky was still fairly bright, but from the first I got interested swirls. As dusk fell these gave place to genuine rises, and when the late feed came on, just on the edge of dark, I got a basketful to this huge, unwieldy lure. My two droppers, though they too were of a fair size, were ignored. The trout seemed to want this great woolly monstrosity and nothing else.

I had tried bustards, of course, many times before, but with only moderate success. Probably I had not made them large enough. This thing was three times the size; but whatever they actually took it for, it proved great medicine.

The salmon hook was too heavy for the light rod I was using. As a compromise I made up various two- and three-hook tackles, smallish irons, twos and threes, dressed tandem-wise, with a few long, light hackles stretching back over the lot. Bodies I made of silver or gold tinsel, with a short hackle on each one. The lures would be perhaps two inches long in all, but they were very light and cast out easily. Towards dark, especially in moonlight, they proved deadly. It was weeks, however, before I got really used to the sight of them: they looked simply ridiculous for trout of any normal size. I used one as a tail fly, about a foot under the surface, and a second one—two yards above the other—as a

bob. This latter swam just underneath the surface, and with a shortish line could be made to skitter across it. The trout took either, sometimes one, sometimes the other. But whatever the lures represented in the eyes of the fish, I very early came to the conclusion that it was something that moved about rather snappily. The more erratically I 'worked' them, the more attention they got.

There was one weird concoction I made up, chiefly for 'Sligo's' moral benefit, I think. He had the æsthetic taste of a Hottentot, and I thought I would show him that colour was indeed, as Ruskin said, the greatest of God's gifts to man. It looked like one of the more exotic breeds of parrot by the time I had finished with it. It startled even 'Sligo.' 'Holy Biddy!' he exclaimed indelicately; and I thought it as good a name for the fly as any other. He allowed me to put it on without comment, standing back as though half-afraid it might sting him, and he still kept up this unusual reticence even as I began to fish.

Success was immediate. I never had such a time. It lasted for hours. Her feathers came off, but Biddy still went on her siren's way and trout after trout leapt gallantly to his ruin. Naturally our minds became unhinged. 'Sligo,' like Bottom's sucking dove, roared gently all the time, interspersing his ribald witticisms with steps of a solemn and intricate nature as each fish was grassed. I have a good working knowledge of adjectives, but I must confess that I was conversant with only a small percentage of those facetiously addressed to the fish, my fly, and the art of angling in general.

But the end must come, even to the best of times. Poor Biddy shed her last hackle, her last wisp of tinsel, and the game was over. 'Sligo' and I made our way slowly home through the darkness with our heads among the stars, talking

lofly of flies and catches and what we should do on the morrow when I had dressed some more.

We were still in this exalted state of mind when we began to fish next night. But 'Holy Biddy' had had her day. Hour after hour we went on, with never a gleam to raise the heart of us. The moon came up, silvering the ripples, and all around us we could hear big heavy trout splashing noisily among the shallows. Exciting rises, some of them almost at our feet. We fished on and on, loyal to the last to the fickle naiad who had forsaken us.

'Sligo,' mercurial as ever, listened coldly to my reasoned explanations. He put it all down to a cross-eyed cat he had met on the way down.

I never knew a man so full of strange beliefs and superstitions. Often during the quiet spells when, with pipes alight, we were lying at full length upon the fragrant grass at the waterside, he would tell me stories of his youth among the wilder parts of western Ireland. His tongue roamed wistfully over the lovely names of half-forgotten villages; telling me how, at one, he had himself both seen and heard the 'little people'; how, near another, a ghostly salmon swam about a haunted pool in the hope of luring some unhappy angler to his doom. He had the folk-lore of his country off by heart, and he did not hesitate to alter or embroider any story he thought in need of it. 'Sligo' had no puerile inhibitions of that sort. 'Tis the trut', he would asseverate indignantly when I happened to laugh. 'Sorra the word of a lie am I telling yez at all, at all.'

He spoke often of his own boyhood village. He was going back there some day, he said, to buy a certain little farm he knew. He scoffed at my suggestion that the place and people might have changed somewhat since his day. 'Faith no,' he said; 'it'll be the same as ever it was. Just

the same. Nothing ever changes in —. There were forty-one people there when I left and there'll be forty-one when I go back.'

'Oh, come, "Sligo,"' I remonstrated. 'What about all the youngsters who will have been born since and . . . ?'

'It'll be just the same,' he asserted easily. 'Just the same. Whenever there's a kid born in our village somebody runs away !'

They came all too frequently, these quiet spells, as the summer wore on. A fresh breeze might blow all day, and then towards evening it would gradually die away and the reservoir become flat calm. The midges would come out and make life a misery. No remedy I ever tried—citronella, lavender, a host of things—kept its efficacy for very long. The best thing I found was to smear myself thickly with cold cream, hands and neck and face. It was a filthy business, but it was better than the midges. 'Sligo' had his own preventative. He wore a dilapidated black felt bowler hat with the crown punched down, and into this cup-like depression he would place a handful of cotton waste which he had previously saturated with crude oil. A match to the waste and it caught fire. 'Sligo' would blow out the flame until he had merely a smoulder, and then back on to his head would go the decrepit billycock and its reeking burden.

I never managed to do much good when the midges were about. The whole reservoir would be ringed with rising fish, but they would seldom look at anything I put up. On the evenings when they were actually jumping out of the water I very early came to the conclusion that the best thing I could do was to pack up immediately and go back home. 'Knotted Midge' I tried, fished both dry and wet, and a host of other tiny patterns. But they were no use really.

Even when I did manage to hook a trout, almost invariably it was a little one.

I remember one particular visitation. I have never seen one like it. Actually I did not see this one, for it must have occurred during the night. But early the following morning, when I went on to the dam, I saw the men staring at a series of great dark patches which had appeared on the surface of the water and seeming to cover half the reservoir. Some of them would be three or four acres in extent. There was more of the scum fringing the banks. On going down to investigate I discovered the whole lot to consist of nothing else but myriads of dead and dying midges. The masses were packed solid, a foot or more in thickness. They could be lifted by the shovelful. Every bay and inlet was choked by them, and a yard-wide, foot-thick fringe ran completely round the water's edge—three miles of it. The water, luckily, was not being used for service purposes, for when decomposition set in the whole place stank abominably. Millions upon millions, there must have been.

Funnily enough the trout left them severely alone. We could see fish rising in the open spaces between the patches, but there were none elsewhere, even on the outskirts. I was surprised at this. It was not as though the midges were all dead, and thus unattractive; up to eight or nine o'clock most of those constituting at least the upper layers appeared to be alive, though quite incapable of flight. But the trout gave them a wide berth for some reason or other. I think that actually the fish were as glad to see the end of them as we were.

But not all calms were unproductive. I had some good fun with what are technically known, I believe, as 'cruisers.' These stately individualists generally have a regular 'beat,' starting off perhaps from some wall-corner, or other point,

and moving slowly out to a certain spot forty or fifty yards towards the middle. From there they will circle round on the reverse beat and end up at their starting-point. Over and over again they do this, keeping to a regular path and rising at everything of interest which they happen to come across *en route*. One can lie in wait for these conservative old die-hards. Five minutes' observation of the frequent rises gives one a fairly accurate idea of any particular circuit, and from this it is an easy matter to drop one's fly somewhere directly in line ahead of him. The lure must be kept quite still, a black dot on the surface of the water, and the feeling of blissful terror as the rises come nearer and nearer is something I never quite got over—or wished to. The last few seconds were awful. My flesh crawled. There would come a rise only perhaps three yards away from my fly—one could see him—and then . . . a wavering bulge in the water . . . a dark shape looming up . . . a great white mouth slowly opening . . . oh, it was fierce !

These sharply defined routes rather interested me in themselves. Some there were which were always in use. I would catch the occupant of one, and half an hour afterwards find that another 'cruiser' had come up out of the depths and was working precisely the same beat, out and home, as his predecessor. There were several of these very definitely preferred orbits. Similarly, there were odd places, little sharply circumscribed spots off shore, where one could always depend upon a trout if there were anything of a 'rise' on at all. Fish after fish could be taken, one after the other at fairly short intervals of time, from these particular places, areas perhaps only a yard or so square. As one trout left another took possession.

I was puzzled why this should be so ; why some little bays, for instance, should always be occupied and others

only occasionally so ; why the trout should so definitely prefer one cruising route to another.

An accident to one of the outlet valves of the reservoir gave me a chance to investigate. We had to run off seventy feet of water, and this of course left wide stretches of the bed of the lake exposed. All round the margin there would be a belt of bare ground, varying from twenty to a hundred yards or more in width, which up to then had been covered by the water. I knew all the positions, almost to a hair's breadth, where the trout had lain, and naturally I went to see if any light could be thrown upon the reason why.

In every case I found a little patch of sand. The normal bed of the reservoir seemed to consist of mud and clay, but at all the well-known 'trouty' spots there was a patch of sand. The 'cruisers' had worked along different belts of it, more or less narrow strips running out from the wall corners, and in four or five cases following what had once been portions of the old packhorse road which at one time had run up the dale. Bubbling springs had caused some of the deposits, erosion of the freestone walls and rocks by wave action many of the others. The best bays had a sandy bottom, the less-frequented ones just the usual dead-looking clay.

I suppose they were actually fly breeding places—the reservoir lay at too high an altitude for mayflies or insects of the type which lay their eggs on mud—and the fish were after the newly emerged nymphs. But whatever the reason, all the favourite places seemed to be sandy. And when the reservoir filled up again I remembered.

I wish I had remembered other things equally well. At one place on the bank a long hurdle-like erection—a twenty-foot plank, fixed edgewise on two upright supports—had been fixed in the early surveying days to mark high-water

level. Later, this level had been altered ; the reservoir was heightened ten feet. The old board was never removed, and of course when the dam was finally filled, to the revised level, it was deeply submerged—well ten feet anyway ; safe enough for any passing minnow. But when the level of the water happened to be some little way below the overflow marks—it was a different matter then ! I invariably forgot it. I would flick my minnow thirty or forty yards out towards the middle and cheerfully start to wind in. Half-way home there would come a sudden check. A fish ? No, too still and unresponsive for a fish. And then I would remember. That long board must have been festooned like a gamekeeper's gibbet by the end of the season.

Mention of this reminds me of one of the biggest thrills I ever got in my life. One evening I had just got down to the waterside when I saw what looked like a good fish rise close to the side of a near-by wall running down into the water. My rod was up, and I cast for him. He took it at once, and judging by the speed at which he dived my fly might have been dynamite. He streaked for the foot of that wall like a homing pigeon. I put on all the strain I dared, but I could not hold him, and a moment or two afterwards my line, still taut, became stationary. Nothing I could do seemed to move it in the slightest. ' Caught up in the stones ! ' I thought ; ' another fly gone ! ' I jerked my rod again in a last forlorn effort, but it was of no use and I put it down preparatory to tugging on the line by hand until either the fly came off or the gut cast snapped. I was just on the point of reaching out for the line when I saw it begin to move slowly out from the wall. Frenziedly I grabbed the rod again and established contact. I put pressure on, all the pressure I dared, but it seemed to have plaguey little effect. He kept deep down, just moving, ever so slowly, across the



bay. Frequently he would stop entirely ; and my rod, bent almost double, seemed quite incapable of stirring him. He lay there, quite immovable, apparently by virtue of his own weight. A dozen times I thought I must be fast in the bottom, but always just as I was giving up hope, my line would begin to move again and I could feel him tugging. I began to think that I must have hooked the grandfather of all trout.

But, whatever I did, I could not get on terms with him. He kept down, down, down ; and at last I came to the conclusion that the light rod I was using was of no earthly use to tackle a monster of this size. If I ever wanted to get him in, the only thing was to try to hand-line him. At the end of a further five minutes I had gathered up sufficient nerve to try it. I put down my rod and very gingerly laid hold of the line. I began to pull, gently at first, and then more firmly. I felt him move ; felt him coming in. He seemed big and long and heavy but, strangely enough, with very little fight about him. Soon I had him within ten yards, five, and then into the shallower water underneath the bank and I could see what I had got. My fish was there all right, a trout of about a pound and a half, and he was caught up short alongside a sodden piece of fence railing almost a yard long. It must have been lying on the bottom, resting on the stones dislodged from the wall, and the trout's first dive had evidently taken him underneath it. Two of his subsequent dashes had wrapped the cast round it again, twice, and there he was, fast. His strength had been just sufficient to move the rail off the bottom a little and then, exhausted, he had had to stop a while. And of course it was just so much dead weight to my rod then.

A pound and a half ! If that line had snapped, especially towards the end, I should have gone straight back home and

told everybody that I had just lost a fish which weighed eight pounds. And I should have believed it, too !

But there were thrills a-plenty, one way and another. I got a thrill from a minnow cast once. Someone had told me to use a thinner thread-line on my reel—I should be able to cast twice as far with it. So, in my trustful way I ordered one, of gut-substitute. I got it on to my reel—at last—and took up my stance.

Except for one thing, that first cast was the finest I ever saw in my life. The minnow, with its half-ounce lead, went up and up, out and away, sailing along a trajectory of peerless beauty, on and on, almost out of sight. I watched it, fascinated. Two hundred yards it must have gone. It would have been a record if only it had taken the line with it.

But minnow fishing is always exciting. In a lake there is no knowing what might get hold ; and to feel some great, heavy, unseen creature, fifty yards away, deep down under the surface, tug-tug-tugging at the end of a line no thicker than the finest hair—three pounds—four—five ?—what a thrill there is in that ! And then perhaps to see the water suddenly burst wide open and a huge golden body shoot up and up into the air and go tearing across the surface like a speedboat in a sea. . . .

They terrified me, some of those fish.

Some of them ? They *all* did, on either fly or minnow. A duffer's paradise, forsooth !

## BY THE WAY.

I HAD been neither reading with close attention nor dwelling in thought upon the recent theatrical performance in Rome, but the mind is wayward, and so it befell that one night in dream I stood with a vast crowd outside a station in the Eternal City awaiting the arrival of the Führer. A triumphal archway had been erected, closed till the great moment with a panel on which his portrait was painted : that was to open and reveal the great man himself. Shortly before he was due, when excited anticipation was rising to its height, his staff appeared beside—not *through*—the archway : among them was one Colonel Schacht, a tall, gaunt man with a huge moustache and this peculiarity, that he was of English extraction, and he was accompanied by his dog. That immediately fell foul of the numerous Roman dogs amongst the waiting crowd : there was a regular canine hullabaloo which attracted considerable attention. Colonel Schacht was individual enough to be concerned only that his dog should not have received injury among the many Roman assailants. Just as the barking and confusion and distraction of the crowd were all at their height the panel flew open, and in the space stood the Führer—without his moustache ! That was to have been the supreme surprise of the historic visit, but owing to the dog-fight it fell rather flat. The Führer was not unnaturally vexed and remarked in anger that that was all that could have been expected from a man of English extraction. And on that I awoke to the quiet of an English dawn.

Can no modern Daniel show the interpretation ? But I forget : the dreamer was not in this instance King Belshazzar : and we can all, it may be, go to sleep again.

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So it is now established, and by a Conservative Prime Minister too, as the recognized practice of our Constitution that whenever a Department of State becomes of real importance in the life of the nation (and there is surely no justification for its existence at all if it is not) the head of it—and, it is apparently to be assumed, his deputy also—must be a member of the House of Commons, ‘to answer his critics in person.’ That this practice not only necessitates in a Minister the strength of an ox, a quality which does not invariably go with intelligence, to have his administration of any pressing piece of business interrupted daily from 3.15 p.m. to 11 p.m., but also completely destroys the authority of the Second Chamber, does not yet seem to have been thought worthy of even so much as comment. A very definite step forward (or backward, according to taste) to single chamber government.

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The dish of criticism can, when flavoured with modern sauce, be extremely piquant. A recent review of the *None-such Milton* by a well-known writer contained the following reference to ‘*Paradise Lost*’: ‘No unprejudiced critic,’ wrote this learned man, ‘can defend the vast tracts of dull and involved rhetoric which give the poem its epic bulk. In detail, too, the poetic style or diction, with its invasions, latinities, and obscure allusions, cannot but be regarded as a sluggish backwater in the swift and clear stream of English poetry. But the poem has many virtues to outbalance these defects.’ Poor Milton—and yet does the cathedral, I wonder, really lose any of its grandeur by reason of the jackdaws that wheel and caw about its pinnacles?

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Sweet are the uses of advertisement—the other day a man of but limited means received a circular which began, ‘Since

your yacht is well over the forty tons standard required by Customs regulations, when bound for a foreign port, you can purchase your wines and spirits duty free.' A pleasant suggestion, to which only one comment can be appended : the purchase of a large yacht, as a condition precedent, seems rather an expensive way of getting a cheap drink. One might similarly offer a man a driving licence at a reduced rate, provided that he first bought a car to drive.

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It has happened more than once that a man's reputation has been but ill served by the publication after his death of reminiscences intended to add to it : the case of Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson comes readily to mind. In another field and degree I feel inclined to concur with Mr. Conal O'Riordan, who has written that if the author had lived he would never have dreamt of publishing *The Childhood of Edward Thomas : A Fragment of Autobiography* (Faber, 6s. net). Much in it will come as something of a shock to those who have grown greatly attached to Thomas's delicate little poems of country life : it is strange indeed that the man who wrote them could not only have put broken nibs into a horse's food to revenge himself upon the coachman but years afterwards relate such an act of barbarity without a single word of self-condemnation, and this is not a solitary instance. The fragment has much psychological interest, and yet lovers of the life-work of Edward Thomas will wish that it had never been given them.

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Mr. Conal O'Riordan is, however, before us as something more than an occasional commentator. He has now brought to an end his great work of fiction, the life story of David Quinn, in a successor to *Soldier's Wife* entitled *Soldier's End* (Arrowsmith, 8s. 6d. n.). I use the words 'great work of

fiction' deliberately. It is one of the oddities of literature, it has been so in all ages and certainly is in this, that those who gain the biggest prizes in their own day are seldom those who are awarded them in the days that succeed: Mr. O'Riordan has been writing novels and plays for many a year, but even so he has not yet come into his own, he is not numbered amongst those who a year or so ago were casually called in literary circles 'the big three.' And yet it is certain, or at any rate as certain as such forecasts ever are likely to be, that he will hereafter be read with attention and appreciation by a widening circle when the work of many, to-day more popular, will be forgotten. He has a sense of character and a sense of continuity, he has knowledge and humanity, he has (as has been observed before) both detachment and intimacy, he has tenderness and he has technique—all these rare gifts are here displayed in this long, fine, concluding narrative of one who is endeared to all who have followed his fortunes.

With this may well be put Mr. Stephen Gwynn's *Dublin Old and New* (Harrap, 12s. 6d. n.). Mr. O'Riordan takes us to London, Washington, and Paris, but it is Dublin most of all which lives again; and to Dublin, 'the compendium of Ireland' as he calls it, there could be no better guide than Mr. Gwynn—though he gives his readers rather an explanation and examination of Dublin yesterday and to-day than all the long and peculiar history of the great and ancient city. And the illustrations are many and varied.

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It is difficult properly to appraise here Mr. Herbert Palmer's *Post-Victorian Poetry* (Dent, 12s. 6d. n.), and for two reasons: first, that, as readers of CORNHILL will recognize, more than one of its chapters were first published in these pages—a testimony, let it be hoped, to their authority, interest, and

excellence ; and, secondly, that it is hard, perhaps impossible, to comment dispassionately upon the work of one who has passed one's own work in review. Mr. Palmer is truly catholic : he takes within his survey everyone, or practically everyone, of recent times within these islands who has written, or seriously tried to write, poetry ; the known and the almost unknown, the famous and the notorious, all are dealt with here. This doubtless adds much to the value of such a survey, it also has its dangers ; and it would seem that Mr. Palmer, because of the width of his reading, is a little unduly inclined to attribute affinities or to find sources of influence which are not in all cases justified. And he is apt to admire with a glowing generosity poems which are, perhaps, of less account than others which seem to be more deserving. But that is, after all, no more than to say that his judgment is individual. Certain it is that no one, interested in the poetic work, or even the poetical endeavours, of the present time, can avoid to neglect this volume. Even those who agree least with the judgments will learn much from them, and as Mr. Palmer himself says : ' The future has a very odd way of reversing the judgments of the present.'

Besides this book of criticism stands the admirable third series of *Poems of To-day* (Macmillan, 3s. 6d. net.), compiled by the English Association. Equipped by a study of these two, anyone should be able to pass with honours even a stiff examination as to recent poetry, from the ' traditionists ' to the ' Dadaists '—if he so chooses. They are all (or nearly all) in both—though in both the latter type receive the most attention, by Mr. Palmer for onslaught, by the English Association for selection.

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In this hurrying age, when so much of our reading is

done in digests and extracts and headlines, it is surprising that collections of short stories, or tales, have not been more popular : everybody who reads at all has times too short for a long connected sitting, and there is also for many the need of a literary night-cap. Good anthologies of stories are none too many : Mr. E. W. Martin's *Parade of Time* (Rich and Cowan, 8s. 6d. n.) is to be welcomed : he has collected together fifteen examples of historical fiction, from Stanley Weyman and Joseph Conrad to Wallace B. Nichols and D. K. Broster, from days of Roman slave-buying to the retreat from Moscow, chronically arranged. Good fare.

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'Italy had become for me,' writes Walter Starkie in his prologue to his Italian autobiography, *The Waveless Plain* (Murray, 12s. 6d. n.), 'as for many of my countrymen in the past, a flowering isle creating in my mind deep melodies and the love which heals all strife.' In spite of Abyssinia—which the author visited during the operations by permission of the Italian authorities—that is still largely true of most English people, and those who remember the Raggle-Taggle books will know that in following Walter Starkie they will not be treated to heaviness of political controversy but to the 'deep melodies' and, still more, to all the gay tunes and the lilting music of a roving, adventurous, unconventional and exceptionally companionable mind. Dr. Starkie has known Italy all his life, and here he sets down his memories of it, with a wealth of anecdote and graphic incident, vivacious always and with a deeper note besides, making of it all a volume which is at once an account of himself, of a country, and of a period of history, all three of which have their abiding interest.

G.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 177.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iv, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach him by 26th February.

' "Guess now who holds thee?"—"Death," I said. But there

The ——— rang—"Not Death, but Love."'

1. 'And milkier every milky sail  
On winding stream or distant ———;'
2. 'From tree-tops where tired winds are fain  
Spent with the vast and howling main,  
To treasure half their ———.'
3. 'The ——— and roses were all awake  
They sighed for the dawn and thee.'
4. 'Aught but weeds and waving grasses  
To ——— the river as it passes.'
5. 'Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,  
Or that Starr'd ——— Queen that strove  
To set her beauties praise above'
6. 'Wouldst thou hear what Man say  
In a little? ———, stay.'

Answer to Acrostic 175, May number: 'In sleep she seem'd to walk forlorn, Till cold winds woke the gray-eyed morn' (Tennyson: 'Mariana'). 1. SecretS (Keats: 'Ode to Psyche'). 2. Life (Landor: 'Fins'). 3. Erewhile (Andrew Marvell: 'A Garden'). 4. Elm(s) (Gray's Elegy). 5. Parted (Byron: 'When we Two parted').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss L. Polglase, Minalto, Alex Road, Penzance, and Miss L. F. Goodfellow, 13 Lea Road, Beckenham, Kent, who are invited to choose books as mentioned above. N.B.—Sources need not be given.

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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AUGUST 1938.

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## *THE ROOMS OF THE HOUSE OF ROMANOV.*

BY COSMO RUSSELL.

TWENTY-ONE years ago this August an Emperor watched the first leaves begin to turn in the parks of Tsarskoe Selo. It was the last time a Romanov would see the autumn shadows fall on those dearly loved surroundings. One of the saddest paradoxes in history was in course of fulfilment. The Tsar, Nicholas II, a simple man and a devoted husband and father, had inherited the most turbulent throne in the world and now, as he gazed from the windows of the Alexander Palace, not only the throne he cherished but the life he most prized, to be alone and at home with his wife and family, were lost to him for ever. By the early days of September, 1917, the Russian Imperial family had been transferred from Tsarskoe to Tobolsk, and all hope that they would be allowed to live in honourable exile had been abandoned.

To-day the outward scene at Tsarskoe, now called Pushkin, has changed but little, and in the Alexander Palace the tragedy of the Russian monarchy assumes its fullest proportions. The visitor, who should see this last home of a Russian Emperor after the other and earlier palaces at Tsarskoe, can visualise this setting as the last scene in the drama of which he has seen the stage and perhaps even felt the presence of the principal players in their former apartments. A strange superstition dissuaded the rulers of the House of Romanov from occupying the rooms of their predecessors. In consequence, new styles rose to favour during the reign of their sponsor and closed when the reign

came to an end. There can be few royal palaces where the sense of period is more strongly developed and where so little overlapping has been allowed to take place.

Tsarskoe Selo lies in the hills to the east of Leningrad. The September sun is shining as we leave our hotel and the waters of the Neva are dancing as we bowl rather precariously along the Quai. We are rightly inspired to stop at the little Dutch summer palace built by Peter the Great. Dutch tiles, Dutch furniture, an enormous barometer, and windows looking over the water, bear witness to the tastes and leanings of the Tsar who 'opened the window to Europe and let progress into Russia.' It is a fitting introduction to the greater work in hand.

An hour's drive brings the tourist to Tsarskoc. This congeries of imperial palaces was started in the second quarter of the eighteenth century by the Italian Rastrelli, architect to the Empress Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great. As we drive up, it is impossible to avoid a swift mental comparison with the approach to Versailles. There is the same broad classical sweep, broken in one wing by the presence of a church tower. Three golden domes, onion-shaped, with chains and heavy gold crosses, still greet the traveller on his arrival at the palace of Elizabeth. This magnificent boisterous lady was a fitting daughter of her great father, combining an intense interest in the culture of the West with that generous love of external splendour, common to the Oriental ruler. The interior of Rastrelli's church is of blue malachite, with heavy baroque gilding. Although evoking in the Western mind a certain restlessness, this decoration forms a fitting introduction to that strange admixture of Western baroque with Russian material and more particularly with malachite, which is the dominating characteristic of Russian baroque art.

The exterior of the Elizabethan palace is of white stucco covered with iron tracery. To-day it shows signs of wear, though it must be admitted, in all fairness, that the Russian Royal Palaces do not usually require the assistance of a Rockefeller to maintain them. The Government sees to their upkeep. Inside a long line of reception rooms leads up to the long throne room, where the sunlight dances in through a double tier of windows. Here Elizabeth used to give balls with a lavishness only paralleled by that of Versailles. The last time a ball was held in this room was the occasion of an international Congress of scientists when the delegates were the guests of the Soviet Government. Fantasy might fashion an amusing situation. Supposing the ghost of Peter's daughter had graced this twentieth-century party of eminent scientists with her imperial presence! History suggests that she would have been highly entertained by their presence in her palace, while they, in their turn, might have repaid her hospitality by solving some of her trying personal problems. Elizabeth for all her intelligence was intensely superstitious. There were times when she positively feared to go to bed. On those occasions she often slept in the throne room where thousands of gold candles had previously shone on the assembled company.

The throne room is seventy-two feet long. The tracery of this vast apartment winds in massive profusion. Russian baroque is noticeable for its broad sweeps. The decoration is carried out on a larger scale than is usually encountered in Italy and Central Europe. Traditional Western features are none the less present. The acanthus leaf is popular. So are the quiver and the arrow. But the association of gold tracery with various coloured marbles and malachites, and later in the eighteenth century with coloured stucco patterns, gives to this example of Russian internal decoration its

individuality. Against this sumptuousness, it is interesting to note a simple ikon hanging high in a corner. To this day no room has been deprived of this essential feature.

A Germanic touch is provided in the Elizabethan palace by the famous Amber Room, built by the German, A. Shluter, and presented to Peter the Great by Frederick William I of Prussia in exchange for fifty-five of the tallest men in Russia—recruits for the Prussian army ! !

Elizabeth basked in the glories of Rastrelli. Catharine II, the wife of the unstable Peter II, succeeded Elizabeth after a short interval as the mistress of Tsarskoe and eventually brought Charles Cameron to the Russian Court. Cameron was a Scotsman, who had worked under Flaxman in England and had come under the influence of Adam. Catharine herself was a German and a stranger. With her the spirit of science and enlightenment predominated over the more lavish emotionalism of the Romanovs. It was natural that she and her principal architect, while avoiding the profuse extravagance of Rastrelli, should pay an increasing attention to essential detail. Cameron was a mathematical genius and Catharine gave him a gloriously free hand. The school of Adam was given a chance to flourish in an entirely new setting and, with the rich choice of working material at his disposal, Cameron created a new palace which remains unique in history both for the mathematical problems which it sets the student of architecture and for the intricacies of decoration with which it dazzles the artist. Cameron altered some of Rastrelli's work, but in the main he kept to the old Russian tradition of building on. The southern wing of Tsarskoe is his creation. Cameron's enfilade is three hundred metres long. On the lower ground floor, beneath the enfilade and looking on to the garden, are a series of small intimate rooms, which were used in the nineteenth

century by Nicholas I, and particularly by Alexander II. In the later part of Catharine's reign these rooms were sometimes given over to her grandsons, the young Grand Dukes. Their close proximity to her own apartments enabled her to keep an eye on the princes.

To return to Catharine herself. While stucco and arabesques were striking the principal note in the reception rooms of the new palace, which rapidly grew out of the old, the cult of simplicity at the end of the eighteenth century made the Empress desire a suite of informal private apartments for her own use. Gold was falling temporarily from favour as the basis of interior decoration. Charles Cameron designed Catharine a 'Silver Study.' This room can hardly be called informal, as it has all the dimensions of a State reception room. It is lined with silver mirrors. The intervening spaces were originally fitted with silver decoration. Paul I, however, had the silver removed and covered the vacant spaces with paintings designed by Guarengui.

The last drawing-room, which Cameron built for Catharine, reflected an increasingly popular taste. It was Chinese with black lacquered walls and fantastic arabesques. Under a table we found a large musical box, with a label entitled 'Voix Celestes.' After a little coaxing on the part of a willing guide, it played a series of Europeanised Chinese melodies. Doubtless, it was given to the last Tsar and placed on his instructions in these suitable surroundings.

West of this room is a small Cameron dining-room. Soubov, the last favourite of the Empress, is supposed to have waited in this room for the news of Catharine's death. It is surrounded by French windows, surmounted by an upper tier, which represent a remarkable geometrical feat. Hollowed tunnels in the ceiling lead to these upper windows,

and on the walls of the tunnels the refracted light illuminates pastoral scenes. This is an interesting example of Cameron's mathematical gifts. Outside the main palace he provides another proof of this particular bent in the Agate rooms, which may have served as conservatories. Here the geometrical pattern of the ceiling is reminiscent of fourteenth-century Gothic.

On the other side of the Chinese drawing-room and facing south are a chain of small rooms which were Catharine's private apartments in the last years of her reign. In the chamber where she died the walls are of white marble. Thin glass columns stuffed with purple gauze mingle with light gold and blue arabesques to give a strangely unreal effect. It is as if a bathroom had been suddenly furnished in the style of a drawing-room. A second sitting-room next door is fitted in the same style, save that the glass columns in this case are packed with blue gauze. There are two small Empire writing-tables of light Russian wood—probably birch. Here Catharine worked, face to face with her minister. There are silver inkstands on the desks and that of the Empress is graced with a small bust of Voltaire, and a suitable inscription in verse. That constant reminder of the little Frenchman must have evoked strange thoughts in Catharine's mind during those last troublesome weeks of her reign, when all Europe was rocked by the French Revolution.

A brief stroll in the garden and a glance at the lake give time for reflection before an energetic guide persuades us to visit the apartments of Russia's rulers in the nineteenth century. Tsarskoe is primarily the creation of the eighteenth century. But Alexander I and II were frequent visitors during their reigns, and their private apartments, still furnished with a plenitude of prints, photographs, albums, and

personal possessions, leave a sense of the past which it would be difficult to equal elsewhere. In one room is a whole set of mounted models, representing the regiments of Nicholas I. In another—the study of Alexander II—lies rather ironically an enormous volume, bound in red vellum. It is an account with pictures of the proclamation of the German Emperor at Versailles.

The rooms used by Alexander I have a particular interest ; not only because no hand has disturbed their essential serenity for more than a hundred years, but because of the strange fascination which this enigmatical character has always exercised over Russians and Europeans alike. Alexander's writing-room, furnished with two magnificent Empire desks, covered with papers, remains as it was. On a side table are a pair of beautifully polished pistols. There is a big table in the middle of the room, covered with official boxes and two long cylinders for despatches, one of which is marked 'for the Tsar's own hand.' We continue through two minute rooms, for the use of the *valet de chambre*, till we come to the bedroom. To-day the bed stands against the wall, surrounded by curtains, though our guide informs us that the Tsar is supposed to have slept in the middle of the room. Underneath a wall mirror is a small stand for swords, with a gold rail. Near by hang the Tsar's uniforms of red and green. It is the room of a soldier and an administrator ; perhaps of a dreamer ! Who knows ? The mind and intentions of that strange personality remain wrapped in mystery for all time.

This visit completes an extremely busy morning. After a temporary farewell from a sympathetic guide, who is to rejoin us in the afternoon, we proceed to the Alexander Park and devour a picnic lunch under the trees.

Hard by a lake in the Alexander Park stands the Alexander



Palace, that modest and poignant reminder of the greatest of all Russian tragedies. Built by Catharine II for her grandson, Alexander, this palace was the last residence of a Russian Tsar. The Italian architect, Guarengui, finished his work in 1796. Catharine died in that year. Before her death she was able to lead her favourite grandson into the central hall of the palace and stand with him by the garden entrance on the opposite side of the room. From here a flight of stone steps led to a fine avenue of trees, and at the far end a pavilion could be discerned, half-hidden in summer by the green foliage. Was there a note of misgiving in the mind of the Empress? By that same door Nicholas II and his family left the Alexander Palace for ever, when the cars came to take them on the first stage of the journey to the cellar of Ekaterinburg. To the right of the hall, facing the park, is a drawing-room arranged as a private chapel. Here the Tsar and his family attended Mass before departure. The room has been left intact.

Nicholas II redecorated a number of rooms for his private use. Much has been said of the terrible bourgeois taste of these rooms, of the oak fittings and interior balconies, reminiscent of cottage architecture, of the numerous photographs, of the seven hundred ikons and religious pictures that decorate the bedroom and the little alcove behind. But the furniture and decoration reflected the taste of a period. While noticeable to-day in the palace of an Emperor, preserved as an historical museum, they were none the less evident in many humbler homes of a previous generation. If it is a general characteristic of nobility to show good taste, there have been times when both royalty and nobility in all countries have given way to that same profusion of knick-knacks and photographs, which marks the rooms of the late Tsaritsa. It is hardly fitting for the visitor to scoff at the

apotheosis of Victorianism. Rather let him realise that he is in the presence of supreme tragedy, not very far removed from his own front door.

In the corner room on the south side, where the Guarengui decoration remains, there is a switchback, once used by the royal children. Three large toy motor-cars are further testimony of those childhood days. To the foreign visitor it is surprising that these recollections of a happy childhood do not arouse feelings of affection towards their late rulers in the minds of Soviet citizens. Are not these sentimental reminders a potential source of danger to the régime? Perhaps some carefully guarded instances of loyalty do still exist in the U.S.S.R. But the Russian character is able to accept the past as a closed book in a manner incomprehensible to the Western mind. Moreover, twenty years of State Socialism have done their work. Parties of Soviet citizens pass in a steady stream through the royal apartments. The Romanovs themselves are not so much living memories as chapters in the State history books. A toy motor-car may seem as remote to the Russian visitor as the Scythian gold in the Hermitage Museum, while the treasures of the Tsar's children are to-day the heirlooms of the Russian State and the strange preserve of the social historian. And yet no Dryasdust has left his mark upon these pathetic toys. In the most tragic way they seem to await their former owners. Even the sliding mat remains in its place at the top of the switchback !

The note of domesticity increases as we pass to a balcony room, full of familiar objects : picture books, games of halma and ludo, transfers and drawing books. One of our party takes a book from a table. It is a copy of Queen Victoria's Jubilee Service. The flyleaf contains the one word ' Alix '—the name of the Tsaritsa. Round the walls are

rows of photographs. We wander here and there, finding new objects of interest. 'There is the Princess Royal!—and the Kaiser! I wonder why they left him there after 1914? Perhaps he was put back later.' Two photographs stand out in particular: Queen Alexandra in her coronation robes, 'From Aunt Alix, with love—1902,' and a smiling Tsarevitch in a sailor suit. There is also a small undistinguished photograph of Rasputin with a few unintelligible lines in his own handwriting.

The wall of the Empress's bedroom is covered with ikons. Doubtless many of these were presents. One picture represents our Lord, stretching out His hands to the Tsar, Tsaritsa and Tsarevitch. Passing by a glass wardrobe, containing the dresses of the Empress, very well kept, we enter a small dark panelled dining-room. Next door a Soviet guide is lecturing to Soviet citizens in the Emperor's bathroom. He is showing the Tsar's wardrobe and saying that he was never out of uniform, military parades playing the principal part in his existence. The bath itself is a spacious swimming-pool and shower-bath, with a flight of steps leading into the water. This room leads into a small private study, furnished with an exceptionally wide divan. Here the Tsarevitch used to play. Because of the hæmophilia from which he suffered, the sofa was especially constructed to mitigate the danger of his falling off. Finally, we come to the billiard room, which is the last of the private apartments. On the outbreak of war, the billiard table was covered with a huge map of the Front and the billiard cues were removed. The map remains to-day. A flight of stairs, built of heavy mahogany, leads to a balcony and a recess, where the imperial councils might well be overheard by an unofficial listener. Dark-grey malachite pillars, with heavy gold decoration, strike a sombre note against the wood. This is not a cheerful

room, nor indeed has it any reason to be so. Twenty-one years after it is still inexpressibly sad.

The visit is over. We leave impressed by the strange illogical respect for the past, which no revolution has managed to eradicate from the Russian character. Propaganda alone is an insufficient explanation for the beautifully kept rooms, where no dust is allowed to mar the books and possessions of their former owners. Perhaps many Russians are unaware of the real fate of the last Tsar. Perhaps they think that he vanished into Siberia, where so many of the best people in Russia go nowadays, including their own parents and brothers and sisters and cousins. And perhaps, if this is the case, it is the best compliment that his former subjects have ever paid to the memory of the last of the Romanovs.

# BETWEEN TWO WORLDS.

BY MARY LUTYENS.

‘WHAT was the last thing you remember?’ she asked.

‘Well,’ he replied, ‘Muriel and Tommy got into one taxi and I said I’d drop you in another. We started out and then suddenly I felt a terrific crash and the next thing I knew was that I was sitting here with you—wherever here is.’

‘I don’t remember more than that either. I didn’t see another car or anything running into us, did you?’

‘No, I didn’t. I don’t remember anything more at all, though the whole evening before that seems particularly vivid. How did you happen to be on the party, anyway?’

‘I’ll tell you,’ she said; ‘it was like this: I was all alone and was going to bed for dinner when Muriel rang up and asked me to dine and go to a play. She told me that the girl who had been going had chucked at the last moment and she badly needed another woman and would I be an angel and help her out.’

‘Yes,’ he said, ‘it was a girl called Eileen Sommerville. Muriel had told me she was coming. Thank God she didn’t come or I should be dead with her now.’

‘I was awfully glad to come because I adore plays and can never afford to go to them unless I am taken. Do you know Muriel and Tommy well?’

‘Yes, Tommy is one of my oldest friends. We were at Eton together, and I’ve known Muriel for years also. I wouldn’t be surprised if they are going to be more cut up over my death than anybody. But I was awfully angry

with Muriel this evening for making us go on to the Four Hundred. I was dog-tired and longing to go to bed, and, anyhow, what is the point of going to a night club in a party ?'

'There were only the four of us !'

'Yes, but you don't want to go to a night club with two of your oldest friends and a strange woman you have no particular interest in. I can say that to you now because I feel that there is nothing I can't say to you now, and it's no good your being offended with me because there's not a cat about the place you can talk to if you don't talk to me.'

'I wonder where exactly we are,' she said. 'It's so dark and yet I can see you perfectly, but goodness knows where the light comes from which you are lit by.'

'It's rather like being imagined in somebody's mind,' he said. 'But I'm really more interested to know how long we have been here than where we are. It might have been half an hour and it might have been a hundred years.'

'I'm sure it's more than half an hour,' she said, 'and yet it can't be very long because you don't look a bit tired or crumpled. Do I ?'

'No, you look as fresh as a daisy.'

'Look at your watch again,' she said. 'It may have begun to go by now.'

He took out his watch from his waistcoat pocket. 'No,' he said, 'it's still five-and-twenty to four. It must have stopped when we had the smash. I know it was nearly half-past three when we left the Four Hundred.'

'I suppose we really are dead,' she said.

'I don't think there can be a doubt about it. What else could we be ?'

'We might just be knocked out.'

'Oh, no. I was concussed once out hunting. I was unconscious, apparently, for nearly seven hours, but that was just a blank.'

'Perhaps this will seem a blank too when we wake up. Perhaps we shan't remember anything about it.'

'That's possible,' he said, 'but I think we must be dead because I feel so well. I drank quite a bit to-night and I was very tired, but I haven't got the vestige of a hangover now and I feel very wide-awake indeed. How do you feel?'

'Absolutely marvellous—so well, in fact, that nothing seems to matter very much—so well that I can't really worry as much over our predicament as I ought to do.'

'Which only goes to show,' he said, 'that ninety per cent. of one's normal worry and depression is due to liver.'

'But do you think this is going to be like this for ever? We can't just sit here throughout eternity talking about ourselves.'

'What are we sitting on for that matter?' he asked.

'It feels to me as if it might be the taxi seat. Is that how it feels to you?'

'Yes, but I wouldn't dare stand up or move about very much, would you?'

'Oh, no, but then I always feel like that even in an aeroplane.'

'I've felt the ground,' he said, 'it's just like an ordinary rough carpet.'

'It's a pity we can't see anything, and yet it isn't like being in the dark, is it? There's no eye-strain and I can see you as plainly as if it were broad daylight.'

'Yes,' he said, 'I can see you too, but everything else is opaquely black. I can feel the floor at my feet and the seat I am sitting on, but I stretched out my hands just now and

there was nothing there. If we were still in the taxi we should be able to feel the sides and the roof. Put out your hand and see if you can feel anything on your side.'

'I hardly dare. . . . No, there's nothing there at all, but I'm quite sure this can't go on much longer. Something will suddenly happen. It's rather frightening, like being in the Ghost Train at Olympia.'

'Are you frightened?' he asked.

'No, not with you here, but I should be if I was alone. How terrifying it must be to die quite alone, but I'm not frightened with you here. You are very strong. I felt how strong you were when I was dancing with you. I don't suppose your strength is going to be of much use in the world where we are now, but it is comforting all the same. You give me a feeling of confidence. I felt that the first moment I saw you this evening. You're not frightened, are you?'

'No, I'm interested, but it is hard to grasp the realisation that we are never going to be on earth again, never see our friends again, never get the chance to finish all the things we have started and left so incomplete, never be able to do all those things we promised ourselves to do before we died. When that realisation really penetrates I suppose we shall get an awful feeling of terror and horror and despair, but it doesn't seem possible to realise it now.'

'Are there many things you wanted to do that you haven't done?' she asked.

'Yes, any amount. I have spent so much of my life drifting and have wasted so many years and so many opportunities. I have always been handicapped by having too much money. I had an aunt who left me her entire fortune, and as well as that my parents are very well off and I am the only child. I have always had the knowledge that I



would inherit considerable sums of money. Necessity is the only efficient slave-driver.'

'What would you like to have done if you hadn't been rich?' she asked.

'I have always wanted to be an architect. I am an architect for that matter, but I'm afraid I only play at it. I design house after house, but they never get further than becoming toy models and no one ever lives in them but children's dolls.'

'Why don't you build yourself a house,' she asked, 'if you are so rich?'

'Because I have got a house already—I think, one of the most beautiful houses in the whole of England. It is in Dorset and it was built by Vanbrugh who was, I must confess, a much better architect than I could ever hope to be. It is a lovely house, and it has suddenly occurred to me that I should like to show it to you almost more than anything else in the world. It is supposed to be haunted. The ghost has been seen on several occasions.'

'What sort of ghost is it?'

'Well, it is supposed to be a woman. There is no particular story attached to her, but she only appears in the garden and people who have seen her say that she looks as if she is holding a child by the hand, but the child itself has never been seen.'

'Haven't you ever seen her?'

'No, not actually, but I have often been conscious of an unseen presence, but not a frightening presence—a benign presence rather, and one that fills one with incredible happiness. I always feel it welcoming me when I go back there after having been away for some time, and I have come to count on it and look forward to it. I really sometimes think that it is because of the ghost that I love the

place so much. But it is very lovely as well. How I should like to show it to you.'

'How I should like to see it,' she said. 'Perhaps we shall become ghosts. Isn't it funny how easy we are finding it to talk to each other and yet at dinner and in the intervals of the play and at the Four Hundred I thought you were the most difficult man to talk to I had ever met?'

'You were talking to Tommy most of the time. But I remember when we were dancing and I was trying to make conversation, you said, "Let's not talk, shall we?" and I was so grateful to you.'

'Then you did feel a little faint stirring of sympathy toward me?' she asked.

'Yes, at that moment you became important to me.'

'In the whole of my life I have never attracted anyone by my looks,' she said. 'People never really like me till they get to know me, but when once they do like me they never stop.'

He laughed.

'I'm not being unduly modest or unduly conceited,' she said. 'It's true.'

'I believe you,' he said, 'and I'm getting to like you so much already that very soon, I expect, the idea of spending the whole of eternity with you will more than compensate for all the things on earth I have left undone.'

'What other things are there?' she asked.

'Well, it sounds silly, but for one thing I do regret not having been nicer to my mother. I really adore her, but whenever she is there she fills me with such vast irritation that I can't help showing it and I know it hurts her. If I had another chance I'd be kinder and more controlled. And then, for another thing, I have always wanted children more than anything in the world—or one child at least.'

‘Why haven’t you had them?’ she asked. ‘Have you never wanted to get married?’

‘I was married,’ he replied, ‘but it was not a success. I realised at once that it was not a success and I knew that if ever we had children I should never get free, because I couldn’t have borne it if they had had to spend half the year away from me. I did get free, but since then—that was five years ago—I have not let myself be tempted to marry again. I shall have to be very, very sure next time—so sure that I don’t suppose it will ever happen again.’

‘I have a child,’ she said. ‘A daughter. She is the only reason why I mind being dead. I mind about her dreadfully because I am the only person she has in the world, and she is only seven. I don’t know what will happen to her now.’

‘What about her father?’ he asked.

‘She hasn’t got a father—I mean not a proper one. Shall I tell you about it?’

‘Yes, tell me about it.’

‘Do you really want to know?’

‘Yes, everything about you has become of fearful importance.’

‘I don’t know that it’s a very unusual story,’ she said. ‘I fell in love with a married man and he with me. We both knew it for a long time and knew the other knew it without anything being acknowledged between us, and then one day we were thrown together in unusual circumstances. Quite by chance we met in Paris and found that we were both alone staying the night there before returning to London the next morning. We had dinner together and went and saw Grock afterwards at the Cirque Medrano. It is the only time I have ever seen him. We spent the night together and the next day we went back to London, and the morning after that I got a letter from him saying

that he could never see me again. He had a wife and children. He didn't want to break up his home and he didn't want to have an affair. He may be a man of great principle and courage or he may just not have loved me enough : that is one of the things I shall never know. Anyway, I wrote back saying that I understood. He said in his letter that he would never forget that night and would always treasure it, and I said that I would never forget it either. I was desperately hurt, and then I found later that I was going to have a baby, and it will perhaps seem odd to you, but I was pleased about it. It came at a moment when life seemed at its darkest and emptiest. I told my mother and she was distraught because I was only twenty and just a girl living at home then, but she was really rather wonderful about it and said she would take me to Berlin to have it removed so that no one, not even my father, need know. But when I told her that whatever happened I was going to have it, she thought first that I must be mad, and then, when I was adamant, that I must be horribly wicked and depraved, and she was all the more angry because I refused to tell her the name of the father. Well, to cut my story short, I had the baby, and I called myself Mrs., and went to live on my own in a flat. That was made possible because I had four hundred a year of my own which nobody could take away from me. What would have happened if I hadn't had a penny I don't know, but somehow or other I should have had the baby—I'm sure of that. I had always done a certain amount of modelling and now I took it up seriously and began making little porcelain figures. I have made quite a bit of money out of them, and I have my own kiln now and do the firing myself. It's enchanting work, and that's how I have been living for the last seven years.'

‘Did the father ever know about the child?’

‘No, I never told him, and I have never told a single soul in the world who he is. I have met him occasionally by accident, but we have never spoken more than a dozen words to each other. My family have more or less forgiven me now, and the new friends I have made, like Muriel, don’t know that I have never been married. I have to keep it a secret for my daughter’s sake.’

‘Why did you so want to have the baby?’ he asked.

‘It never seriously occurred to me for a moment not to have it. I had loved him and I just couldn’t bear to think of that love being altogether fruitless. It seemed so right. It is only in the last half-hour, for the first time in all these years, that I have questioned the right and the wrong of it. I don’t know what will happen to her now. I should like to have lived until she was grown up and happily married.’

‘Won’t your parents adopt her?’

‘Yes, I suppose that’s what will happen, but it won’t be the same. She is so very, very much my responsibility.’

‘Did you never think of getting married?’ he asked.

‘Not seriously. There have been one or two people who wanted to marry me, but I haven’t loved them. I could never marry anyone I didn’t love, but I have always felt that one day someone would come along to take care of us.’

‘Do you still love the child’s father?’

‘Oh, no, but I still remember what it is to love. I’m glad I knew it once, at least, before I died. I wouldn’t really mind being dead if it wasn’t for the thought of Betty—oh, and there’s another thing I’ve just thought of, but it’s rather bathos after what I’ve been telling you. This afternoon I left a blue sapphire ring in the lavatory at the hair-dresser’s. I rang up when I got home, but they were shut

and I was going to ring up the first thing to-morrow morning. I'm afraid they won't know it's mine and I should so have liked Betty to have it because it's the only good jewel I've got. It's ridiculous to think that, if I suddenly found now that I wasn't dead, the first thing I'd do would be to ring up the hairdresser's.'

'If I suddenly found now that I wasn't dead,' he said slowly, 'the first thing I'd do would be to ask you to marry me.'

'Out of chivalry?' she said, smiling.

'Not at all, but because I have fallen tremendously in love with you. Do you remember what I said to you just now about having to be very, very sure?'

'Yes.'

'Well, I am very, very sure. Do you know, you are lovelier than anyone I have ever seen in my life?'

'But I am not lovely. I am not even pretty.'

'But you are, you know. I didn't think it when I first saw you this evening, but I began to be aware of it when we were dancing and now I know it.'

'I believe it was you all the time who was going to come along and take care of us. Isn't it sad that I shouldn't have found you till I died? And I don't even know your name. They called you David, didn't they?'

'Yes, David.'

'David . . . David . . . David,' and her voice became suddenly anguished. 'Oh, David, it's going to happen. I feel it, do you? Something is going to happen. Oh, I should be so frightened if you weren't here. Hold me, David; hold me. I am so frightened of being alone.'

He put out his arms and as they closed round her she melted out of them, and he had only a fading remembrance of her presence and her warmth as he slipped away from her

into consciousness. Later he would have given all he possessed in the world to be certain that he had held her in his arms even for a second. He stared wide-eyed and bewildered at the white ceiling.

The first question he asked was, 'Where is she?'

'Sh—sh,' said the nurse.

A blinding pain struck him between the eyes and knocked the speech out of him, but in his mind he went on asking, Where is she? Where is she?

It was not till the next day they told him she was dead. Her skull had been fractured and she had died immediately. 'No,' he said, 'it must have been at least an hour.' But they told him she was dead by the time the ambulance arrived. She had never recovered consciousness. 'No,' he said angrily, 'no, it must have been at least an hour. You don't know anything about it.'

They did not argue with him. They allowed him to babble on. He had been badly concussed, poor fellow, and several ribs were broken.

He kept asking to see Muriel, but they would not allow him to see anyone for three days, and then it was his mother who came to stand by his bed. 'You are no use to me,' he said to her. 'Please get Muriel for me. I must see Muriel. Please get her for me.'

'My darling boy,' she said.

'Please go away,' he said. 'You are no use to me. I need help. I need Muriel. She is the only person who may be able to help. I am in dreadful trouble.'

His mother whispered with the nurse at the door. A wave of anguish broke over him. He cried out loud. The nurse came hurrying to him.

The next day Muriel came to see him.

'They won't let you stay long,' he said, speaking very

fast, 'so you must listen carefully and do what I ask you and answer all my questions. It is of desperate importance. Now first of all tell me quickly everything you know about her. What was her name? I never took it in.'

'Whose name?'

'The woman who was killed, of course.'

'But, David dear, you mustn't hold yourself responsible . . .'

'Oh, for God's sake, tell me,' he shouted.

The nurse appeared at the bedside. 'I think you had better go now.'

'No, nurse, she's got to stay.'

The nurse and Muriel exchanged meaning looks and Muriel went away. David began to sob. 'What is it?' asked the nurse.

'She is so frightened without me.'

The doctor gave instructions that the patient was to be kept very quiet and not allowed to see anybody for the next day or two, so it was almost a week after the accident that David had his first satisfactory talk with Muriel.

'Her name was Frances Baker,' said Muriel. 'No, I hadn't known her very long. About seven or eight months, I should think. I found her very useful because it isn't often that you come across an attractive, unattached woman in London who can play bridge and never minds being asked at the last moment and always seems to be disengaged.'

'How did you first meet her?'

'I met her first at lunch with a friend, and she told me that she did porcelain figures, and I was interested and said I should like to see them and she took me down to her kiln the next day. Her figures were exquisite. I bought one.'

'What is it like?' he asked.



'It is of a woman holding a child by the hand. It is very simple, but it has tremendous charm and grace. It was a theme that must have appealed to her because there were several like it, only in different positions, but they all seemed to be of the same woman and the same child.'

'Where can one buy her things?'

'I don't know. I got mine from her direct.'

'Where did she live?'

'She had a flat in Dorset Street.'

'Did you ever go there?'

'Yes, I went there once.'

'Did you see her daughter?'

'Yes, a darling little girl.'

He wanted to ask her about the funeral but could not bring himself to do so. 'Do you know what has happened to the daughter?' he asked.

'I believe she has gone to live with her maternal grandparents. She doesn't seem to have any relatives on her father's side. I think there must have been some mystery about him. I never heard Frances mention him, and the woman I first met her with at lunch told me that they had been divorced under particularly disagreeable circumstances.'

'Do you know the name of the grandparents?'

'No, I'm afraid I don't.'

'Muriel, listen,' he said. 'Will you do something for me? Do you by any chance know the name of her hair-dresser?'

'No, whatever do you want to know that for?'

'Do you think you could find it out?'

'I might be able to.'

'Well, do, there's an angel. On the afternoon of the day she was killed she left a blue sapphire ring in the lavatory there. She rang up, but they were shut and she was going

to ring up first thing in the morning. Find out who they are and go there and get the ring and bring it to me and I will see that Betty gets it.'

'Who's Betty?'

'Oh, she's the daughter.'

'You seem to know more about her than I do. When did you have time to learn all these things?'

'I don't know,' he said truthfully. 'But please do that for me. Will you? And bring it to me to-morrow?'

'I'll try, but even if I discover who they are and find that the ring is still there, I don't suppose they'll give it to me.'

'You can say you were her best friend and that the task of recovering it has been delegated to you by her mother. Will you try? It is so important. You see, it is the only good jewel she had.'

'Did you fall in love with her that night?' asked Muriel suddenly.

'Yes,' he replied.

'My dear, I'm so sorry, but it couldn't have gone very deep, could it, just in one evening?'

'It wasn't just one evening.'

'Why, had you met her before?'

'No.'

'Was it love at first sight?'

'Oh, no, I didn't love her till she died. Or perhaps she wasn't dead then, or perhaps she was. I don't know.'

'What do you mean?'

'I don't know,' he said. 'I don't know anything, but what I would like to know is whether I would have loved her if she hadn't died. I think I would—in fact, I'm sure of it because I don't think there has ever been a time when I haven't loved her.'

Muriel looked puzzled. 'Well, I must be going,' she said. 'I don't understand half you're saying, but I'll try and get the ring for you.'

'Will you? And bring it to-morrow? And will you also bring the little china figure?'

'All right.'

Muriel returned the next day and she had the ring with her. 'I managed to get hold of her maid,' she said, 'who told me the name of the hairdresser and I went round there. They did not know who it belonged to and had been keeping it until someone claimed it.'

She gave it to him and he let it lie in the palm of his left hand while he cupped his right hand over it. It gave him comfort. 'Did you bring the statue?' he asked.

'Yes, it's here.' When she came in she had put a parcel down on the chair with her bag and gloves, and now she picked it up and unwrapped the little china statuette and stood it on the table by his bed. It was of white porcelain and the figure of the woman was about eighteen inches high. She held a girl child by the hand, but the child was stooping as if picking a flower, and straining on to her hand. The woman was looking down at her, smiling.

He gazed at it for a long time in silence. At last he said, 'It is a perfect self-portrait.'

'Of Frances!' exclaimed Muriel, 'but it's not a bit like her.'

'It's the living image of her,' he said. 'It's exactly how she smiled when she said to me, "Out of chivalry?"'

'But it's no more like her than I am,' protested Muriel. 'I should say it was a purely imaginary person. It's certainly not Frances.'

He turned his eyes to Muriel. 'Isn't it really like her?' he asked.

‘No, not a bit.’

‘You are probably right,’ he said. ‘It probably is an imaginary person—at least she probably thought it was, but do you realise—what has only just occurred to me—that one cannot create anything or imagine anything that is not oneself? That woman is Frances : you don’t know it and she didn’t know it, but I do.’

‘I think you’re a bit crazy,’ said Muriel.

‘Will you let me have it?’ he asked. ‘I’ll give you anything in the world for it.’

‘Of course not, I’ll gladly give it to you.’

‘Thank you. That’s sweet of you.’

There was silence between them for a little while. He pressed the ring tightly in the palms of his hands. ‘I must find Betty,’ he said suddenly. ‘I have decided to adopt her.’

‘Now I know you really are crazy,’ said Muriel.

‘On the contrary, I have never been saner or more determined about anything in my life.’

‘But her grandparents will never part with her, and why should they? A perfectly strange man?’

‘They won’t be able to refuse when I have done with them. I can give her everything she can possibly want, and I am certain that I know better than anyone else in the world how her mother would like her to be brought up.’

‘But why do you want to adopt her?’

‘Because,’ he said slowly, ‘she is so very, very much my responsibility.’

*REINDEER ROUND-UP.*

BY E. M. HINDS.

OLLA would be there ; Olla, whom she had not seen since the great spring trek.

Again she recalled those few sweet weeks of travelling with pulka and reindeer over the snow-clad tracts ; and the shy glances they had stolen at one another across the camp fire. Then had come the parting of the ways. He must go with his kith and kin to the north, she with hers to the south ; for in these directions lay the summer grazing-grounds of the tribes' respective herds. As Aina had watched the distance growing between them she noted with joy that Olla looked back.

That was three months ago and she had not seen him since. But to-morrow, the day when all would be setting out for the autumn round-up and sorting of the herds, they would once more approach one another ; he walking about twenty miles south to the stockades, she going the same distance north.

Twice had Olla hoped to see her since the spring, yet each time he had been disappointed. She had not been to the two previous round-ups, for girls do not work with reindeer when there are men and boys at hand. Fortune favoured her on this occasion, as her only brother was away guiding a tourist over the mountains, and he had not yet returned.

With special care she braided her hair and donned her new cap. Dare she wear her silver brooch, the one only worn on Sundays ? And her best neckerchief ?

No ! Perhaps it would be wisest to carry them inside the blouse of her tunic until she reached the stockades. Old Inga Partapuoli, with whom she was to go, had an unpleasant knack of noticing things. But no doubt all women with six handsome unmarried sons are ready to suspect eligible spinsters of husband-hunting. Little did Aina realise that on several occasions Lars Partapuoli had looked at her with an unusually tender expression. And his mother had understood.

. . . . .  
The powerful sun blazed down from a clear blue sky, when, bearing their heavy packs upon their backs, the young girl and her companion set off up the steep hill through the birchwood. Aina, walking behind, watched old Inga's scalp turn from pink to crimson, and beads of perspiration run down the thin strands of greying hair. So she suggested sitting down to eat berries before entering the long stony tracks above the regions of plant growth. Not that she needed to stop. She could have walked the twenty miles without a rest, but she remembered old Aunt Rasti telling of an elderly Lapp woman who didn't like the young girls to think she couldn't keep up with them. She had gone so fast that her heart had given out and she had dropped dead on the trail.

But Inga Partapuoli intended to take her time. 'It is no good hurrying when we have all day before us,' she remarked, when, after eating a great many blue-berries, she sat back on her heels and started to fill her pipe.

Aina thought of the tent she was carrying. She knew it would take some considerable time to get comfortable for the night if they camped on the bare hill where the stockades were situated. There would be at least an extra mile to walk for wood and water. Her companion read her

thoughts, for she said, ' We are not going all the way to-day. We are only going as far as Henrick Tomma's old kâta. He says we may sleep there. It will be warmer than in a tent and we can get up early in the morning so as to see the herds enter the enclosures.'

So Aina abandoned all hope of seeing Olla that day.

Never had she made such a slow journey, and never had a companion been more irritating. Five times the old lady took off her boots to rearrange the grass that she used instead of stockings : and wherever there was the happy combination of running water and dwarf birch, she insisted upon making coffee. Naturally it was Aina who had to collect the creeping birch and make the fire. In the meantime old Inga settled down to another pipe and between the puffs told Aina what a good wife she would make for a boy like Lars.

Aina said nothing, but hung her head to hide her blushes. She trembled a little at the thought of complications. But Inga Partapuoli construed matters differently.

. . . . .

A mysteriously translucent twilight filled the sky when, after many hours, they reached the edge of the plateau. Below them, like an immense sheet of beaten metal, was a lake ; to the left, with a background of greenish primrose, a great purple mountain streaked with numerous amber-coloured glaciers ; and to the right, silhouetted against the golden sky, one of the herds of reindeer.

Both women stopped for a few moments ; the one to gaze at the herd—so great a part of which belonged to her and her family—the other to send her thoughts beyond the mountain on the left along the trail which she thought *he* would take.

Then, silently, they descended the steep birch-clad escarp-

ment. Instinctively the two women picked up wood as they neared the kâta. It was a peat-covered, tent-shaped hut, which, obviously, had not been used as a dwelling for some considerable time.

Having dumped the wood and removed their heavy packs, they set about making the place like home. Aina climbed up the outside to remove the boards which covered the smoke-hole. Old Inga entered by the rickety door, and judging from her expression, was not pleased with what she saw. The floor was littered with mouldy twigs, shrivelled leaves and other rubbish. And when she raked away the litter even the bare soil appeared dank and unwholesome.

However, during the next hour the place was transformed. Having removed everything that contributed to squalor, they made a fire inside the ring of stones in the centre of the floor, fetched water from the lake, and set the coffee kettles on to boil. Then they cut great bundles of fresh green birch twigs with which to cover the floor. And it was surprising how many armfuls were necessary to make a thick, comfortable carpet for that erstwhile untidy hut.

Only reindeer skins were lacking, as the old lady remarked. However, quite good substitutes were produced from the bundles they had carried upon their backs, and before long both women were squatting on the floor enjoying a meal. Scintillating tongues of fire from the blazing birch logs danced upon the green leaves on the floor, upon the turned-up toes of their Lapp shoes, and upon their contented faces.

Suddenly the door opened to admit a young Lapp and his yellow dog. Both, apparently, were dead-tired. They were Lars Partapuoli and his boon companion, Lum. For more than a week they had been seeking reindeer. To-



night, as there were sufficient men with the herd, Lars could have an undisturbed night's rest.

With a cheery word he took his reindeer-skin rucksack from his back, took out his coffee kettle and set it on the fire. Then he joined the others on the floor and commenced a meal. Lum, meanwhile, sat patiently by, accepting with gratitude anything his master offered, but, like all Lapp dogs, never did he whine or beg.

From time to time other men and dogs entered. Some asked if they might sleep in the hut, others took it for granted that they would be allowed to do so. Even the Lapp policeman came. He was a Swede whose duty was to attend round-ups in order to settle disputes should they arise. In all his ten years' experience he had not seen the slightest sign of disagreement between the Lapps. The policeman could speak the language of these people ; nevertheless, it seemed that the party lost something of its merry nature when he entered. Most of the Lapps stopped their joking, becoming suddenly serious and almost inarticulate. However, entertainment came from the numerous people who dropped in for a chat on their way to their own camping places.

First there was a party of women ; the Nutti and Labba girls and their mothers. They knocked, entered and sat on the logs which bordered the pathway from the door to the fire. They were camping near the stockades, they said, but as others had gone ahead to do the work there was no need for them to hurry.

Old Inga again set her coffee kettle on the fire, although, seeing that there were now at least a dozen little copper coffee kettles all very much alike, it was a wonder she could recognise her own. The visitors knew that it was her intention to make coffee for them, so they said they had just drunk

coffee before coming to the kâta and would not take any more. Even when camping, Lapps are in no wise lacking in courtesy to their guests.

Another knock announced more callers. One wondered whether there could possibly be room for them on the overcrowded floor. After all had moved a little closer together, space was found for the new-comers—men and dogs, the owners of the reindeer which grazed on the mountains to the north. They had not seen their friends from the south for many weeks past.

Lars was now sitting next to Aina, perfectly content, although she was quite oblivious of his proximity. She listened intently to the conversation of the latest arrivals, hoping to hear Olla's name.

At last she was rewarded. Olla, it appeared, had been assigned the herding of the reindeer from the mountains near the Norwegian boundary. Because he was young and intelligent, and recognised as a clever herdsman, he had been specially chosen to work in this difficult region. He had not yet joined the big herd, but was expected during the evening.

The old Lapps then forgot even the presence of the policeman. They talked of the good old days when Lapps could wander where they liked with their reindeer without fear of fines or trials.

'It is so hard to keep them within the limits imposed,' grumbled old Per Nutti.

And Inga Partapuoli joined in, saying that life was much better in her young days when they moved about more instead of staying all summer in one camp and all winter in another.

'It is not natural,' she complained, 'for a Lapp to settle down for months at a time. Life was better then, when

we were always on the move. Why, I used to think nothing of going from Finland across Sweden to Norway and back again during the summer. And how many Lapp children to-day know anything of real Lapp life ?'

Then, as though surprised at her own outburst, she became suddenly silent. For some moments nothing could be heard but the crackling of the logs on the fire. Then Lum,

dog, sat up straight. His hair bristled and his eyes blazed. He was staring fixedly at Anders Omma's black

dog who was sitting quietly eating a scrap from the floor near Lars Partapuoli's feet. With a sudden bound the yellow

dog sprang at the black one. The other dogs in the kåta

jumped up and joined in. Barking, snarling and hitting at each

other, round and round they chased and scrambled. Over

the people, through the fire they went. What a com-

motion there was ! At last peace was restored and the dogs had to be content with growling at each other from a distance, as their masters made them sit at their sides.

The policeman suggested that as it was ten o'clock and they were to leave at two in the morning it was time to sleep. Lars looked at his watch. 'It is five minutes slow,' he remarked. 'I put it right by the sun yesterday, and forgot to do so again to-day.'

So the visitors departed, and the seventeen who remained made for themselves beds out of the bundles they had carried upon their backs.

A short time later, Lady Moon, gazing in through the smoke-hole, saw a red glow of fire surrounded by stones, and radiating from it, like the rays of the sun, all with their feet to the fire, fifteen weary men and two tired Lapp women. She smiled a little at the tricks of Fate as she read the dreams of a man, a maid and an old Lapp woman.

The policeman was as good as his word. Well before two o'clock he made up the fire, filled his coffee kettle and went out to wash in the lake. This was a sign for the others to do likewise. Reluctantly, one by one, the men roused themselves, although Lars said he was certain that the herds would not reach the stockades until seven o'clock. When his coffee was ready he handed a cup to Aina, telling her, after she had drunk it, to go to sleep again for another hour or two.

'Lars knows more of the ways of the reindeer than does the policeman,' remarked old Inga, when all the men had gone. 'If he says they will get there at seven, you may be sure he is right.' So she threw some wood on to the fire, pulled her fur *pesk* round her shoulders and with a grunt or two once more settled down to sleep.

. . . . .

The sun was high in the sky when at five o'clock they set off. Nevertheless, something of the Spirit of Morning still hovered over the mountains. It seemed to the two women that the world belonged to them alone, so still, silent and full of peaceful beauty it was.

But as soon as they had scaled the first ridge of hills they knew differently. Approaching from every direction were a hundred or more Lapps with bundles on their backs, lasso ropes across their shoulders and dogs at their heels. Some had walked all night; others, like Aina and her companion, had camped *en route*.

Towards seven o'clock, as they neared the stockades they saw a herd approaching from either side of the hill. Lining the routes to the two entrances, like soldiers at a coronation, and just as colourful, were Lapps. Suddenly, when the herds reached these guards of honour, came a sound like the

thundering of a mighty waterfall. The great discs of mottled brown rapidly became ribbons of rushing animals.

Aina ran to watch the entry of the nearest herd. The thundering of the hoofs was deafening, yet somehow its rhythm struck right at the heart and set all the pulses throbbing; throbbing with exultation. She felt lifted out of herself. Tears came to her eyes and a thrill passed through her body. What it was she could not understand; some sensation from past ages, perhaps, when the world was young and all living creatures were really free.

Instinctively she knew that it was communicated to her by the reindeer. They held their heads proudly, with a pride born of freedom, yet their dainty, disdainful steps took them swiftly where they were unwilling to go. Only their eyes told the truth. In them was something of fear, something of stubbornness.

Aina, bright-eyed, dainty, and dignified as the reindeer, silently watched the grand procession. Her pulses kept time with the rhythmical beating of thousands of hoofs.

At length, when they were all inside the stockades she turned to seek her own reindeer. The great thrill had ended, and with it had gone some of the light from the girl's eyes.

But a touch on the shoulder soon brought it back again. For a moment she and Olla stood face to face. They did not speak; words were not necessary, nor would they come. In that brief moment each read from the countenance of the other the answer to three months' secret pondering.

Then, quickly turning on his heel, the young man prepared his lasso rope for casting and the maiden wandered amongst the herd seeking calves whose ears were clipped to the pattern denoting her family's ownership. Aina seemed to be in a dream. She scarcely noticed the strange mixture

of sounds—grunting reindeer, crepitating hoofs, barking dogs and shouting Lapps.

For about half an hour after they had entered the stockades the herds continued to race round and round. When they became more resigned work began in earnest.

Four groups were to be made from the two, as animals from four different areas had mingled together.

Aina and her father now met and discussed work. Then the old man set about lassoing big animals and taking them to their mates in the other large enclosure. Aina caught calvés by the leg and half dragged, half carried them to the same place.

Now and again father and daughter were obliged to seek help of one another. This was usually when the reindeer decided to sit down instead of being led, dragged or driven. And it sometimes happened that the two of them together could not make the creatures budge. Per Nutti pulled on the rope until his hands bled, and Aina's arms ached through pushing from the rear. One grand old fellow with branching antlers of great size absolutely refused to be moved by any means. He just sat tight and rolled his eyes derisively at his owners.

Aina looked round for help. All the other Lapps were working so hard that they seemed not to notice what others were doing. All except one, and he frequently glanced in Aina's direction. Seeing their distress, he left his own work and offered assistance. Even so, this stubborn animal was as much as the two men could manage.

Hour after hour they worked. Then Aina's father suggested stopping to make coffee.

'You might ask Olla to join us,' remarked the old man. 'He has been very good in helping us.'

Per Nutti was a good and experienced herdsman who

loved his reindeer. He had taken a great liking to the boy, for he recognised his skill with animals.

‘That boy is not like some of the young Lapps of to-day,’ he remarked to Aina. ‘He doesn’t get savage with the reindeer when they are obstinate.’

But the girl knew this already. She had noticed that instead of dragging his calves along the ground, as many did, he carried them all in his arms.

. . . . .

They were thankful to leave the enclosures for a while and to crawl through the barricades into clean pure air. Many other Lapps were already drinking coffee and several called to Per Nutti to sit at their fires.

Much to Aina’s disappointment he actually accepted Inga Partapuoli’s invitation to join her and Lars. The girl only participated in the conversation when she was addressed. Unconsciously she compared the two young men who sat opposite to her. Actually they were alike in many respects, both being rather tall, blue-eyed, fair complexioned typical northern Lapps. Unlike many of their tribe, they were so race-proud that they disdained to wear any but true Lappish clothes and scorned to follow any but Lappish pursuits. Yet, in the eyes of the girl they were as different as night and day.

There was no time to waste. Two cups of coffee, a brief rest and they were back at their job.

Many hours’ work had yet to be done. By the time the herds were in order all the men were black with dust and perspiration and many had bleeding hands. However, that was not the end. Each owner now studied his herd carefully in order to decide which calves to kill and which animals to castrate. Per Nutti and Olla helped one another

in this, as one man alone cannot do the work. The animals must be struck to the ground and held, usually by almost sitting on the head, while the herdsman bites with his teeth either through the testicles or through the spermatic ducts.

When they were ready to kill the calves Aina had to be found, for not only had meat to be considered, but the skin as well. Aina needed a new fur park for the winter and her father wanted her to choose the skins for herself. For like most men, he did not trust his judgment where feminine apparel was concerned.

Although Aina liked a pretty coat, she hated to see the calves killed. The knife, struck straight at the heart, reduced suffering to a minimum. Nevertheless, the girl left the enclosures before her father began his unpleasant task.

She soon forgot the matter when Olla came along and offered to help hold the cows while she milked them. The two wandered through the herd once more ; this time the boy lassoing the cows and the girl milking them into a birchwood bowl. She had to milk many cows before her bowl was full, as no reindeer gives more than a cupful of milk and many give less. The delicious rich milk is slightly sweet in taste and regarded as a great luxury. Small wonder, then, that as soon as milking was finished they went to make coffee again, this time for the sole pleasure of enjoying the milk.

However, a noise from the enclosure, announcing that the auction was about to commence, caused them to hurry over their second cups. Unbranded calves that were not running with their branded mothers were to be sold. For the first time in the day the policeman became a prominent figure. He stood by while an old Lapp brought along the one and only calf to be auctioned.

For a while no one made a bid. They all sat back waiting,



knowing that whoever bought the calf must kill it, as it is forbidden by law to brand it and let it run with the herd.

At length someone offered 'Akta grone'—one shilling. This was followed by other bids each a shilling higher than the previous one, until 'Veeshta grone'—five shillings—was called and the auction ended. The money was paid to the policeman, who would pay it into the Lapp Fund.

People now seemed to be taking things easily. Olla and Aina, knowing that the small herds of animals that had wandered from the far-distant mountains would be the first to leave, went back to the fire. Inga Partapuoli and Lars were not there now. All the same, the young couple talked only of very mundane matters. Yet they were happy to be together and remained there until it was time for the herd with which Olla's reindeer ran to set out for their rightful feeding grounds.

As they rose, Olla remarked quietly that perhaps at the next 'Raktid'—round-up—Aina's reindeer would be running with his.

'But we must talk about it after the autumn trek, when we get to our winter quarters,' he concluded, hurrying away to hide his blushes.

Aina hastened to the stockades lest she should miss something of the thrill which always accompanies the departure of a large herd. Women, girls and men who were not to go with the reindeer were taking up their positions on either side of the route they were to take. For about half a mile this guard of honour stretched. Herdsmen and dogs remained inside until the signal was given. Then, raising their nostrils as though they smelt freedom, prancing with excitement, the grunting reindeer poured out. With great bounds they thundered their way down the hillside.

With eyes more lambent than those of any reindeer Aina

watched them go, and with them, Olla. At last he had become a speck upon the distant mountain and no more reindeer were to be seen. Yet still she watched. Yes, it was as usual. In their excitement at the first moments of regained freedom the animals forgot everything except the joy of wide-open spaces. For about half an hour they had followed the leader. Then, little by little the herd had broken up. Cows sought calves from which they had become separated, calves sought their mothers and with grunts of distress returned to the stockades. Cunning old reindeer wandered off in little groups while the herdsmen and dogs were trying to collect the cows again.

Aina stood dreaming of her lover out there all night on the bare stones, maybe snatching an hour or two of sleep, maybe having none at all, and this after a hard day's work.

A voice behind her brought her from her reverie. It was old Inga asking her if she were ready to take the trail once more. So she shouldered her pack and went off, hoping to get a good sleep. On the morrow she was to help find the straying animals. Early in the morning a ring would be made round the herd. This would gradually be made smaller until all the reindeer were together again.

*BRITISH MUSIC.*  
*A RETROSPECT OF HALF A CENTURY.*

BY A. E. KEETON.

THERE must still be a few musicians, scattered about the world, with memories of Anton Rubinstein's colossal series of lecture-recitals on pianoforte music given throughout the length and breadth of two continents. One young English listener at least, first hearing him in Moscow, never forgot his opening sentence : ' There is an island, a two thousand-mile journey across Europe. I take that island as my starting-point in the story of pianoforte literature ; for I hold England to be its birthplace.' Forthwith he played ' The Carman's Whistle ' and others of the lovely early music primitives by Tudor composers for the virginals and harpsichord. Later he took Purcell, and dealt with the nocturnes of John Field, whom he summed up as ' the direct precursor of the soul, the spirit, the very genius of all modern pianoforte music—Chopin.'

Some years after this experience, talking with another of last century's musical giants, Hans Richter, I quoted Rubinstein. Richter commented that if the English had any good composers, ancient or modern, precious little was ever heard of them. He himself, he added, had only met with one worth mention—this was Arthur Sullivan, for whom he professed such genuine admiration that if on occasion some ultra-serious Teuton approached him with a ponderously weighted score, Richter felt he could do nothing better than advise careful examination of, say, the overture to ' Iolanthe ' as a dynamic example of how much can be perfectly expressed

with a surprising minimum of means. Wagner and Sullivan—a musical antipodes; yet Richter, perhaps the greatest exponent Wagner has known, could say with conviction of Sullivan's genre of light opera, that in its own typical and national calibre and style it was as good as anything of Wagner. Richter was also of opinion that England possessed many first-rate vocalists and choruses of unrivalled excellence, but that our orchestras (in his day we had very few) were only very so-so.

When finally I settled in London these stray pronouncements from a Rubinstein and a Richter made me open my ears with keen attention. I found a bewildering welter of music-making of all sorts, good, bad and indifferent; but the only concerts I could discover where English names abounded, and which undoubtedly could attract crowded audiences and could (I was assured) bring huge fortunes to their chief promoters into the bargain, were certain gargantuan orgies, the Queen's Hall and Albert Hall Ballad Concerts. These affairs struck me, though, as but sad and sorry travesties of that delicious Tudor heritage championed and beloved by Rubinstein. Evidently I had taken a wrong turning. When I tried again, the scene was once more the Queen's Hall, but this time uncrowded. I was all agog, though, for now surely I was to find my Mecca and perhaps lead thither that doubting Thomas, Hans Richter, since I was invited to nothing less than first hearings of whole programmes of works by young British composers introduced under the obviously generous and kindly auspices of the Ernest Palmer Patron's Fund. Alas, there could be no potential fortunes here, whether ill or well begotten. Just as I have never forgotten my juvenile elation listening to Rubinstein in Moscow, even so I still retain a sense of deep depression and melancholy engendered by these singularly

dismal and abortive performances. The participants seemed merely bent upon celebrating their own obsequies with all due speed. R.I.P.<sup>1</sup>

I look back upon my divings and delvings—my many perambulations up and down England—round about, and in and out of London concert-halls and opera-house. When was it exactly that at long last, definitely, I caught the strains of a contemporary music with—as in the Tudor days—a genuine heart-beat of its own, expressed in a diversity of strongly articulate individualities? I know it was the baton of an enthusiastic Yorkshire Squire, the late Sir Alexander Bosville Macdonald-of-the-Isles, that first made me aware of Elgar.<sup>2</sup> I was already on the trail of Hubert Parry, of Charles Stanford, of Ernest Walker, Ethel Smyth, of Alexander Mackenzie, of Delius, Joseph Holbrooke, Hamish McCunn, of Benjamin Dale, Percy Grainger, Frederick Nicholls, Richard Walthew—Granville Bantock—Gustave Holst of—of whom shall I say? There was a regular spate, a small galaxy of these people. Their every work was not, one knows, a superlative masterpiece, but a good percentage of it had sincere, vital quality, and Elgar at least has proved a gem of first magnitude to shine in the music sceptre of any nation. Also, it is by hearing his music well interpreted

<sup>1</sup> The 'Ballad Concerts' died and disappeared long ago, but the 'popular ballad' can obviously still attract a certain type of listener, and seems to have found a permanent home with the 'B.B.C.' The Patron's Fund continues active, but advisedly travails and brings forth its efforts in collegiate privacy.

<sup>2</sup> During the latter decades of last century, Sir Alexander Bosville (then plain Mr. Alexander Bosville) ran what were known as the 'Bridlington Musical Festivals,' for which from year to year he got together and trained his own choir and orchestra and himself rehearsed and conducted the whole proceedings, and as soon as one festival was over, started training chorus and orchestra for the following year. Many English works and a number of young British artists got a first hearing at these festivals.

that a composer surely may best perceive its defects and remove them.

Time has elapsed since I had any opportunity of hearing these composers. I have, though, retained an abiding impression of rare poetic fancy and sensitive workmanship in the pianoforte pieces and songs signed Frederick Nicholls ; of finely wrought, beautifully balanced chamber music, as well as being characteristic vocal work by Ernest Walker. A gem amongst our song literature is Walker's setting of W. Henley's 'Bluebells from the Clearings.' Or there is Ethel Smyth's Opera 'The Wreckers,' strong and vigorous in its tragi-humorous portrayal of Cornish history and psychology.

Very little of this music perhaps, even now, can have passed the manuscript stage, and comparatively little of it to this day can often have had the well-rehearsed, adequate public hearing which it is honestly worth. The status of British music was in 1900, in fact, very much where Rubinstein had found Russian composers a full half-century earlier ; and for years he had devoted the entire proceeds of those famous lecture-recitals to the task of making his Russians—since become of world repute—prophets also in their own country. Moreover, he lived long enough to see his dreams come true. Somewhere about 1905 I discovered—through a chance meeting with the late William Elkin—another and very important English musical milestone. In 1903 (the identical year, by the way, that the Ernest Palmer Patron's Fund also came into existence) Elkin had risked his all upon a venture then unique in England. He set up as a publisher solely of modern British music. He combined rare vision with genial, practical accomplishment. He gathered round him a nucleus of composers, the bulk of them of a younger generation than Elgar, Parry, Stanford

and the rest. Elkin became no millionaire. But his venture easily justified itself. It could even survive the tragic 1914-18 setback to all good publishing work. He afforded fine opportunities to these younger ones, and incidentally backed quite a number of winners, amongst them Cyril Scott and Roger Quilter. And his inceptive idea caught on. He set the pace to other publishers, who have followed in his path.<sup>1</sup> And yet, could Hans Richter return to earth, he might still ask : ' Your British composer—I yet do not hear much of him ? ' It is nevertheless no longer a question of lengthy delving and diving. Richter could at once be introduced to the B.B.C., which behaves quite well to British music. He could also, if he glanced through the ' Provincial News ' of our foremost music journals, note quite a fairish amount of British names, and he might in more general chronicles even discover them from time to time in the musical activities of Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Vienna, Salzburg, etc. Another very fertile source, which fortunately can embrace in every sense our musical and communal life, is the wonderful network of competitive festivals firmly established, not only throughout the British Isles, but also alert and alive in the Dominions. The competitive festivals held in the provinces of Western Canada, for example, are splendid users of British music. This may well be, to some extent, a pleasing and abiding witness to the grand pioneer work carried out some years ago by Dr. E. H. Fellowes and his choirs in Canada and the U.S.A. The educative and artistic value of the competitive festival movement can hardly be too highly appraised. For that very reason, an impartial and most enthusiastic listener may

<sup>1</sup> William Elkin also ranked as a leading authority upon musical copyright, and used his knowledge to the great benefit of performers and composers as well as of publishers.

perhaps venture a word of very modest criticism and caution. Cliques and clichés are always dangers to be strenuously avoided. Here and there to an attentive onlooker there can creep in a suggestion of somewhat too close adherence to what may be termed the 'Royal College,' 'South Kensington' or 'Folk Song' schools. Every serious musician readily places Vaughan Williams in the first rank of our musical life. But as I have tried to show, he is not the only bird in our music bush.

Another criticism may be offered in the sphere of solo concert-giving. If, for instance, vocalists do happen to include an 'English group' in a programme, why is it almost always placed as an afterthought at the very end, when the satiated critics, whose bounden duty it is to spread the good and the bad tidings, have departed, and the audience is also trickling away? Much the same criticism, but in even greater degree, can apply to the pianists.

This brief survey is an attempt to sum up the chances and changes of British music, its merits and destiny spread over some fifty years' personal observation. I present it, as seen, heard and felt merely by myself. My perspective and outlook may be quite wrong. I write explicitly open to correction. The composers I have had chiefly in mind have been of pre-war origin. There is also a conspicuous post-war group—such as William Walton, Constant Lambert, Benjamin Britten, Arthur Bliss, Edmund Rubbra, Victor Hely-Hutchinson, Arnold Bax, Roger Coke . . . To one whose own lifetime has well exceeded the septuagenarian allotted span, and whose earliest musical impressions were imbibed (and retained, too, very tenderly down the years) by hearing the harmonic and melodic transparencies of Mendelssohn and Gounod, or the glorious tenor of Sims Reeves trolling forth Balfé's setting of 'Come into the garden, Maud,' it has



been a tortuous journey to arrive amongst the moderns. Sixty years or so of music travel implies much more complex going—say—than the progressions from a sedan chair to a monoplane. Perhaps I could never be entirely at my ease in the monoplane ; more especially since I have had no more scientific musical guides than my own fairly erratic, peripatetic, personal tastes. My earliest stepping-stones onward from Mendelssohn and Balfe, I found amongst the Russians, Dargomúishki, Móussorgski, Borodine ; or the Norwegian, Grieg, or a Brahms, a Debussy, a Ravel, a Dukas—and then back to Russia with Scriabine and Stravinski—and here, finally, once more in England with the distinctive vigour and resonant dissonances absolutely characteristic of Cyril Scott—and again the fine music miniatures of the much younger man, Victor Hely-Hutchinson of Hogarthian wit and humour. The approach of my own older and now quickly passing generation can easily be diffident, hesitant.

My personal experience has taught me, though, that the nearer one gets to the moderns—the more familiar with their accent and idiom—the more vibrant and significant strikes their note and their message. I have indeed the feeling that these composers are inevitably as much part and parcel of the expanding life of to-day and to-morrow as are Imperial Airways or the B.B.C.

Just as I had finished this slight sketch I happened upon K. von Stutterheim's little book, *Those English*. Herr von Stutterheim devotes a considerable portion of a chapter on English Civilisation to our music. He regards our modern musical output not only on the executive, but also on the creative side, as a great renaissance. He remarks that in the Tudor-Stuart period England was the leading country in music ; that she bids fair to lead again—in some respects is already leading—and that, on an altogether higher grade than

is being achieved anywhere else at present. Or again quite recently, the British Council has offered a musical scholarship of £250 per annum tenable for three years to enable foreign music students to complete their education in London. This is something much upon the lines of the famous Prix de Rome of Paris. A writer in *The Times* remarks : ' This is the first effort on anything like the same scale undertaken in this country. It should prove invaluable in building up in foreign countries an expert appreciation of British music.'

Perhaps though, finally one of the healthiest and most significant portents of the spread of a taste for British music, is the fact that one can pick up a popular weekly and find, in a serial ' thriller ' by Anthony Berkeley running through its pages, a little party of friends in a country drawing-room discussing the relative merits of an Arnold Bax or a Vaughan Williams' gramophone record. This is indeed bringing modern British music right into the home circle.

## *THE BLAEBERRY HOLLOW.*

BY S. N. MEARNS.

CAMERON, I knew, was a teller of tales ; the old tales of Badenoch, of the clansmen and of their forerunners the Picts.

We had tramped for two hours, but so far the conversation had been of ordinary things, sheep grazing, deer forests and fishing ; the story I hoped for had not materialised.

Arriving at Loch Pityoulish, which lies at the foot of the mountain called Craigowrie, we paused to rest ; and sat for a while in silence gazing at the rugged spur of rock on our left.

Cameron broke the silence. He pointed with the stem of his pipe towards the western side of the loch and said in his soft highland voice :

‘Do you see yon hollow?’

‘Yes!’ I said ; ‘that one without trees, do you mean?’

‘Aye! the one without trees. Do you not think it is strange that there are no trees in it?’

‘Well,’ I replied, ‘now that you mention it : I notice there are trees on three sides, but none in the hollow itself ; possibly there is something in the soil which does not suit them.’

‘Aye,’ he said ; ‘something in the soil. If you would care to hear, I’ll tell you the story.’

He began, very deliberately, to fill his pipe while I settled down to await the tale. The sun shone on the face of the hill, making the bell heather show up in vivid purple patches. A light breeze ruffled the quiet waters of the loch and

whispered gently among the leaves of the birches where we sat. A chaffinch warbled his short song near, and the plaintive call of a curlew came over the water, melancholy and muted.

Cameron had his pipe lighted now and began :

‘ You know that we are on the borders of Rothiemurchus, the Great Plain of the Pines. This land, like most other land in the North, has had many owners at different times and, each time there was a change, men died.

‘ Long ago the forest was held by the Clan Shaw who lived in their rough stone, turf-thatched houses near where the present village stands.

‘ One dark night during a very severe winter, they were surprised and attacked by a band of the Clan Cumming, who had, for long, been their enemies. The swiftness of the attack found the Shaws unprepared and, so, unable to offer any great resistance. It became a massacre ; most of the men and several women were killed, the remainder fled into the forest where many died of exposure. Rothiemurchus had changed hands.

‘ Among the few who did survive that night of terror were an old woman, Mhairi a nurse, and her charge Ian, the son of the chieftain.

‘ How she lived and kept the child alive as well, during the succeeding days, no one knows, but she did and made her way south to Perth, where a branch of the Clan Shaw lived.

‘ After a few years, when the boy had outgrown his need of her, Mhairi came back to her native soil. The Cummings permitted her to settle near them and, as they regarded her as a witch, allowed her to come and go about her simple domestic tasks in peace.

‘ Twenty years passed, the boy had grown to strong man-

hood. His very black hair and dusky complexion had earned for him the name of Ian Dhu or Ian the Black.

‘Over and over again Mhairi had told him the story of that night of blood among the dark pines ; he brooded over the wrongs of his people and the death of his father ; a silent bitter man nursing a hate and a lust for vengeance.

‘When he was about twenty-six he gathered together forty young men, his cousins and friends whose hatred of the Clan Cumming was only slightly less than his own. With this reckless band he set out from Perthshire to reopen the twenty-five-year-old feud.

Early one morning, when the heads of the flowering grasses were silvered and bent with dew and mist clung to the tops of the pines like a torn veil, Ian Dhu and his followers arrived at the rude hut of the old nurse.

Bidding his men remain hidden in the forest, Ian cautiously approached the door and knocked. Presently he heard Mhairi get up and come to the door.

“Who,” she asked, “would be knocking at an old woman’s door at such an hour ?”

“It is myself that’s in it ; Ian Dhu,” he said.

“How would I be knowing if it is Ian Dhu or no ?” said Mhairi. “Put you your mouth to the crack and say ‘the word.’”

‘So Ian Dhu put his lips to the crack in the door and whispered “the word” which she had taught him when he was a boy for just such a time as this.

‘When she heard that word she opened the door and let him enter ; she went to the fireplace, raked over the smouldering peat and threw on a handful of resinous chips to form a blaze. In the light of the flaming wood she looked at him out of her shrewd old eyes.

“You are grown into a fine man, my Ian, and like your

father was ; twenty-five years this back end it is since he died with his dirk in his hand across his own hearthstone. God's curse on all the Cummings !”

“ “ Yes,” he said, “ twenty-five years of waiting, Mhairi ; but the day of reckoning has come. With me I have forty men, all Shaws, and we are going to give the Cummings a sup out of their own pot. I must be on my way ; it grows lighter and will be dangerous for us in the forest. I called to see you in passing, my heart, before I take what I have waited for so long.”

‘ He moved to the door, his hand was on the latch when Mhairi's voice stopped him ; it came quietly but with great insistence.

“ “ Wait, laddie ! With my own eyes I saw you grip the hilt of your father's dirk when you were only a few days old ; although my years are many my memory is good, I have forgotten nothing and I, too, have hated. There is a better way. What good will it do to burn a few hovels and turn your men loose among the women ? That would be a poor revenge. Hark to me ! The menfolk of the Cumming are on a foray toward Forres : this day they are expected home. Come with me, Ian Dhu, you and your men ; I will show you the place of vengeance.”

‘ She wrapped her plaid round her shoulders and with Ian Dhu at her heels stepped out of the hut into the mist-laden morning, and set out at a rapid walk in a north-easterly direction.

‘ The men who had lain in the wood fell in behind their chief one at a time with the silence and bloodthirsty intentness of hunting weasels.

‘ Thus they followed the old woman for two miles till they came to the open country round this loch ; where Mhairi stopped and said :

“ You are in time, Ian Dhu, they are not yet come ; take your men to the north end of the loch and hide there. I will climb this hill here and signal to you when they come and which side of the water they take.”

‘ Mhairi started to climb the rocky hill and Ian took his men to where she had pointed ; and there they hid in the undergrowth to await the signal.

‘ The men of Clan Cumming were very near ; driving stolen herds and carrying booty acquired on their foray on the low-lying counties further north. They had had a hard time, the farmers of Moray had shown fight and much hardihood in resisting the pillage of their herds and goods and had even pursued the robbers to the borders of Badenoch, so that the Cummings had to press on all night.

‘ Now, being near home, tired and hungry, handicapped by several wounded and driving footsore beasts, they had straggled out into a long line.

‘ They chose the west side of the loch as the going was easier and, having no fear of enemies on their own land, had no scouts to warn them of their danger, but walked straight into the trap set by Mhairi and Ian Dhu.

‘ The first few men were killed before they had time to realise what was happening ; the remainder were picked off in the same way as they came up in threes and fours. One or two tried to fight but were quickly overpowered, their bodies being dragged into the hollow to be out of sight of those following, till all were accounted for. The sole survivor was a young lad who had been knocked down but only stunned.

‘ The Shaws’ lust for vengeance was satisfied and the taste was as bitter as leaves of bog myrtle in their mouths.

‘ The boy recovered and was dragged before Ian Dhu,

where he stood awaiting his fate with what defiance he could muster ; but he was young and very frightened.

‘ Ian Dhu looked from the bodies of his slain enemies to the boy before him and asked :

‘ “ Who are you, boy ? ”

‘ “ I am Seumas,” said the lad, “ fourth son of Alistair Mor of Rothiemurchus ; my father and brothers are there.” His chin quivered and he pointed over his shoulder at the dead.

‘ Ian Dhu gazed at the boy and wondered if he should be killed ; he bore the hated name, but he was very young—and his vengeance was complete. The boy should live and take a message to his people.

‘ Ian felt suddenly very weary, he sat down on a rock and spoke to the lad.

‘ “ See, boy, I shall spare your life ; the debt is paid. You will go to Rothiemurchus and you will tell what you have seen this day. Say also that Ian Dhu, son of ‘ the Shaw ’ who died at the hands of your people twenty-five years ago, has taken his revenge for that night’s work. ‘ The Shaw ’ will sleep in peace from this day. Go, boy.”

‘ The boy went.

‘ Ian Dhu and his men marched into the hills and scattered ; no trace of them was ever found.

‘ The boy arrived at the little village and sobbed out his tale. The women covered their heads with their plaids and began the keening for the dead, and set out for the hollow to bury their loved ones who were now no more.

‘ When they arrived and Seumas’ mother saw her slain husband and her three stalwart sons her grief and rage were terrible to see. After the burial when the women knelt to sing their lament, she alone stood, dry-eyed, and cursed the place.



‘ “ Accursed hollow, where lies the best of our clan, ye shall remain for all time open to the sky. No trees shall grow nor flower of the heather ; no birds shall build their nests and the beasts of the field shall shun ye and in winter the snow shall lie deep ! ” ’

Cameron’s voice sank into silence, he had a far-away look in his eyes, back in imagination in those far-off, turbulent days and seeing, as I did, a mental picture of that tragic woman after burying all that was dear to her.

The silence lasted for several minutes ; there seemed to be no comment necessary. At last Cameron spoke again, very softly as if not to disturb the sleep of the long-dead warriors whose bones lay in that sunlit hollow.

‘ I cannot make an attempt even to explain such things, but, as you see, there are neither trees nor heather growing there, only blaeberry : the blaeberry was the badge of the Cummings.’

## MIRANDY.

BY LADY ADAMS.

MIRANDY was the coloured cook in the quiet hotel near the University, where we stayed for years in Los Angeles. Her cooking was like a culled pusson's dream of heaven. When we gave a dinner-party, Mirandy and I used to discuss it for days beforehand, fir de fud an' de flavourin' were vital interests to Mirandy.

I played the piano every morning immediately after breakfast ; I kept my sitting-room door open, Mirandy kept her kitchen door ajar, and I always finished with some spirituals, and what she called ' de melodies dat my soul loves.'

And then Mirandy fell ill. She sent in a quite beautiful party dinner for us one evening, and I managed to put my head into her shining kitchen on my way upstairs to our own quarters, and to whisper :

' Mirandy—your chicken was a marvel,' and she said :

' Listen, La-aa-dy, did ye awhl like mah canta-loopy ice cream ? '

Next morning, she struggled to get to her work in good time for breakfast, but by lunch-time she was ' awhl in, an' jist *hid* ti go ho-ame.' And when little old Mirandy jist *hid* to do something—well, there was no more to be said.

Next day, Edward, the black butler, told me she was very ill, and when I asked him what we could do, or give, or offer, he said :

' Lady—'Randy won't be with us awhl fur long—Lady—cud ye go ti see 'er ? '

So I telephoned to ask if I might go, and ten minutes later was on my way with some gifts, including two avocado pears, because Black Edward said 'Randy liked dem, dey was awful grand, an' dey was nourishin'.

I thought I would never reach Mirandy ; there seemed no reason why the street car and I should not go on travelling for ever. Mirandy came frum de fur end uv de culled quarter, and went back by street car every night—and Mirandy always looked contented.

I thought I had been given the wrong address ; the house was large, and in excellent repair ; her neighbours seemed the nicest kind of coloured folk ; her granddaughter opened the door, and took me upstairs ; the furniture was good, old and shining. Beulah told me that de house wuz Gran'ma's ; but dat dere wuz a turrible mor'gage, an' dat wuz why Gran'ma did yer washin'. Now I realized why Mirandy had diffidently asked if she might do our washing—awhl but de stiffy shurts, an' de cawhlers ; for the mortgage.

She was lying in a huge four-poster, the sheets were dazzling, and she looked just like a tiny tortoise that had crept into a bed and was too scared to come out. Her little wizened hands held the sheet, and her face lit up at seeing me and the avocados and the roses ; but she was too tired to speak.

'Sing, please, Lady,' she whispered, so I crooned 'Way down,' and 'Poor Black Joe,' and from that I drifted into 'There is a Happy Land,' and from hymns to the Psalms of David ; I stayed with David, and blessed my Scotch upbringing that enabled me to sing through most of the verses of many psalms. I do not know how old Mirandy was ; but I did not know that anybody could look so aged and be alive.

She died that night, holding a rose, and two days later I

got an invitation requesting the honour of my company at the funeral of Miranda Jessica, widow of Manasseh Jameson.

The funeral parlour was full when I got there—and I was half an hour too early. The wreaths, the bouquets, the crosses, the crowns, filled every corner—and it was January. Mirandy was evidently a person of importance; more; the coloured quarter loved her. She was lying in her coffin in front of the altar, in her Sunday dress; a white shawl was over her shoulders, her little old hands were full of roses, her little black head was resting on a cushion of roses; all pure white. But the Mirandy we knew and loved was gone. 'The artists of the funeral parlour' had been at work; her sunken cheeks had been filled out, she was smiling, there was colour on her lips and on her cheeks, her hair had been oiled, her nails were shining. It was incredible.

There was a beautiful service by a coloured clergyman, and we sang 'Our loved Mrs. Manasseh Jameson's favourite hymns': 'A Few More Years,' and 'There Is A Happy Land.'

We were all asked to 'defile in front of Mrs. Manasseh Jameson,' but I stayed where I was, remembering Mirandy in her little hug-me-tight, and her contented black face. This smiling lady was new to me.

Then a curtain was drawn in front of the casket, and the relatives, all clad in an almost French depth of crêpe, were asked to 'take a fond farewell,' while we others sang 'Till We Meet Again.'

I had meant to go home after the service, but Mirandy's sons and daughters had other plans for me. At the eldest daughter's request, a coal-black man came up to me, and invited me to ride in his car. He told me, before I could open my astonished mouth, that he had been a taxi-driver in San Diego, had saved enough to buy, first a taxi, then a

Ford, then a Chevrolet, and lastly a hardly used Hupp, of which he was very proud. He said that though he had bought it as an owner-driver speculation, still, fur two weeks he wuz drivin' his friends fur pleasure like, an' if I wud jine in, we would hev a wunnerful fest drive ti the cem-e-tairy. So I jined in. I was shoved, for I could not slip in, into the back seat between two huge negresses, one in purple, the other in scarlet—and when I say 'scarlet,' I mean it. The driver-owner packed the rest of the car with grinning, happy coloured folk, and at the end, two crisp-haired children materialised, and were squeezed on top. 'The X marks the débutante,' I murmured to myself, as I remembered *Punch's* picture, and sank out of sight.

Then came an amazing drive. In the coloured quarter, funerals take precedence; funerals may do so all over the world, for all I know, but few cortèges take such advantage of their rights as we did. Dear Mirandy set off in her flower-laden hearse about two minutes before her friends. It was obviously felt that she should have her chance; she shot down the street, and turned hard and fast to the left; when the Hupp started, which it did with hoots from the Hupp, and cheers from most of the occupants, it turned equally fast to the right. Everything and everybody made way for us; the coloured policemen stood with bared heads as we whirled by, every car trumpeting; my colleagues on the back seat sat with their folded arms on their great chests, except when they unfolded them to wave to friends, or, sometimes, just to the world at large. Finally, we got to the coloured folks' last resting-place. Mirandy was there first, her two drivers looking eerily excited. None of us showed our annoyance, but our driver-owner said thet eftern awhl, 'Randy hed hed a gud stert. Nobody asked my opinion, which was that Mirandy would have loathed it all.

Then came another service ; the coloured minister, who had done his own racing, was doo at a wedding ; but he was dignified and earnest, and though he conducted it with dispatch, still it was sweet and gracious. My scarlet friend then told me it was time to go, for Mirandy, who had rushed through the streets in a quite gorgeous casket, was going to be slipped out of it and buried in the shell underneath. The top casket was hired ; so were the French-looking clothes and veils of the chief mourners. Everything hired had to be back at the funeral parlours by two o'clock. The owner of the Hupp came along to gather his load. He asked me to join them ; they were goin' drivin' some, an' were goin' ti hev a li'l fun'ral lunch somewheres, an' wud be hannered ef I wud jine dem. But I had had far more than enough ; I was startled, cold, miserable, and rather upset. Some people would enjoy their own funeral ; Mirandy would have hated hers. So I débutanted with the Hupp to the cemetery gates, and then took a tram home ; over five miles it was, and the going was slow. But the tram was more like a funeral than the Hupp, and I had time to collect myself, and to think of our little Mirandy as she used to be.

*Los Angeles.*

## ADEN PICNIC.

BY HEATHER HAMILTON.

### I.

‘TEN rupees stand between you and death.’ The lanky Somali boy pronounced this momentous utterance with suitable solemnity as he brought in the early morning tea. A staggering statement to be faced with, even at high noon. In the early hours of the morning, when just awakened from dreamless sleep, it takes on the significance of Fate. Death : what death ? Obviously one is expected to die shortly, unless—what was it ?—ten rupees could come to the rescue. But have we got ten rupees ? Do we want them to stand between us and—death ? At this hour we are not sure ; perhaps, after all, death would be a happy release—at least it would obviate the necessity of having to get up.

But we must pull ourselves together, and, keeping a stiff upper lip, demand an explanation of this cryptic statement. It appears that the sea is rough and dangerous, and full of sharks, and boats are easily overturned . . . Yes, yes, all this we know : but we come of an intrepid seafaring race, and have faced these dangers before. What, then, the significance of this long preamble ? Let us get to the point. But Achmed is not to be hurried. Follows a soul-stirring description of wrecks at sea : and are we not aware that this very day we are setting out on an expedition, and that there are to be *mem-sahibs* in the party, and yet we have no life-saving apparatus on board the boat ? Through a glass darkly, we yet begin to see glimmers of light. Can it be that for ten rupees Achmed is going to provide us with a

life-belt apiece, or a rocket-gun? or maybe a small motor lifeboat? Obviously, we are not in a fit state to cope with matters of life and death, and to avoid further disgrace by asking frivolous questions, we meekly hand over the money and hope for the best, remarking mildly, *en passant*, that 'it' (should it have been 'they'?) must be ready by noon, as we are timed to depart at one o'clock.

The rest of the morning is spent gathering together what small amount of stores we need, and collecting the odds and ends required for a short week-end in camp. After an early lunch, we join the rest of the party at the Club.

The dhow is at her moorings, a picture of elegance and grace, her scarlet and gold flag blowing bravely in the breeze, her green and white paint gleaming. The crew are on board, stowing the kit. On catching sight of us the 'skipper' jumps lightly into a dug-out canoe, and paddles ashore. Two by two we embark, sitting uneasily in the bottom of this unstable craft, our knees drawn up to our chins, gripping the sides to try and keep our balance, and looking as unconcerned as it is possible to look when enveloped in an aroma of generations of dead fish.

Miraculously, we find ourselves alongside and still right way up; gingerly we stand erect and, determined to show our mettle, leap (as we hope) nimbly on board, nearly submerging the 'skipper' as, now that we are leaving it, we light-heartedly use the canoe as a spring-board. Regaining our dignity, we move for'ard to inspect a sinister rectangular object which had already focussed our attention from the shore. Without a doubt, it is Achmed's life-saving apparatus. A monstrous raft, six feet by three, taking up the entire deck-space forward, a wooden framework over which is stretched a piece of canvas, the whole supported by empty petrol-tins. In spite of its unwieldiness, the 'skipper' is



entranced, and hastens to explain how the *mem-sahibs* are to sit in the centre, while their menfolk propel it. We find it difficult to share his enthusiasm, conjuring up a picture of valiant manhood hanging round its sides, concealing with brave jests the fact that their nether limbs are being nibbled by hungry sharks in the depths below.

The anchor is up. The long yard is laboriously hoisted and the triangular sail shakes out. We are under way. Slowly we nose our way past half a dozen small boats at their moorings, slip by the stern of one of H.M. ships (rather nearer than we intended, but only we know that, and we refuse to catch the skipper's reproachful eye)—out into the fairway. Away from the lee of the land, the wind blows strongly, and like a thing alive, the boat strains forward. The sky is cloudless, and almost colourless : the sea is an unbelievable blue, foam-flecked. The heat and the glare produce a pleasant soporific effect, and disposing of ourselves as best we may, we tilt our topees over our noses and prepare to contemplate the infinite. The crew squat for'ard, in the shadow of the sail, Hussein the taciturn, Mahomed the talkative, brawny sailormen both, born to the sea : with close-cropped hair and broad, pleasant faces and shining coffee-coloured skins, they wear only a dirty once-upon-a-time white singlet, and a 'futih' or short kilt. It is too hot to talk, even Mahomed is silent, and Abdullah, the youngest member of the crew, is somnolent. He is a bright-eyed, intelligent lad still in his teens, with a quick smile, showing a flash of perfect teeth. He wears a turban, and his clothes are almost clean : though he comes of fisher-stock, he is town-reared, and obviously 'a bit of a lad,' but a good seaman none the less. The 'skipper' is at the helm. Standing a good four feet ten inches in his bare feet, with bandy legs and a wizened face and little bright boot-button eyes,

one is tempted to think that here, at last, is the Missing Link. His seamanship is unerring and instinctive, and his mind is that of a fish. He knows what the fish are doing, and why. 'To-day we will not catch fish,' he says, 'because they are sad. But to-morrow they will be happy, and we will catch many small ones. Next week, we will get big fish. On Wednesday, the sardines will be in, the big fish will follow them. On Thursday we will catch many big fish.' And lo and behold, it is so.

We make for the point of Little Aden, and, rounding it, we pass the crew's native village of Baraika, a cluster of miserable huts on the seashore, where nets are spread to dry, and canoes drawn up on the beach, but there are no signs of life at this blazing noontide hour when wise men take their ease, and only 'mad dogs and Englishmen' are abroad. Beyond is a desolate, eerie landscape, with a beauty all its own. One feels the moon must be like this : jagged spikes of slate-blue mountains with rivers of pale yellow sand surging round their feet. Relentless, barren, without vegetation or shade, swooning in the midday heat. One could not be surprised to see great grey lizards emerge from the creaming surf, or a leather-winged pterodactyl swoop down from a crag, even a troop of H. G. Wells's 'Moon Men' would not be out of place, for this is surely a different world from the kindly earth we know. It is age-old beyond our comprehension, and terrifying in its starkness. One would not like to wander there alone, and it is with relief one sees the little shining white dome of a saint's tomb in a fold in the sands : lonely, it accentuates the desolation around, but it serves to shake one out of one's nightmare imaginings. Here, at least, is evidence of puny man, as we know and understand him !

We are brought roughly back to reality by Sinbad, the

Sea-going Sweeper, who up to this point we had hardly noticed, beyond conferring his title (which was to prove singularly inapt) upon him. He had been enlisted by Achmed to look after the sanitary arrangements of the camp (as in India, Sweepers are a class apart). We stipulated that he must have had experience of the sea, so that we should have no trouble with him on the voyage : but alas ! for human frailty, poor Sinbad is overcome with excessively noisy sea-sickness. He is curled up like a dog, a picture of abject misery. His coal-black negro face (for he is of slave stock) is the colour of grey ashes and there is no doubt that he has already reached the stage when death would be infinitely acceptable. Poor Sinbad ! we are sorry for him, but we wish he could be less noisy in his suffering.

Thoroughly aroused from our midday lethargy, we begin to sit up and take notice. Excitedly, someone points out a huge sting-ray flapping near by, and someone else thinks they see the triangular fin of a shark break surface for a moment. Coming up astern is a dhow of about our own size : she does this trip daily, carrying water to the villages on Little Aden. The ' skipper ' hails her, and we begin a neck-and-neck race which lasts until we reach our destination. The excitement is tense, our honour is at stake, and with a sigh of relief we drop anchor a good five minutes before she does. The sun is low on the horizon as we round the last bluff and come under the lee of the land, sailing gently into calm sunset water. Canoes push out from the shore as the anchor goes overboard. From the mud and grass hovels of the village the inhabitants pour out to have a look at the strange arrivals. Children predominate, they come running from all directions, fearful lest they should be missing anything. Little sisters carrying babies on their hips, as their mothers do ; big brothers hand-in-hand

with toddlers—fingers in mouths, tummies well forward, they stand speechless, regarding us with huge dark eyes. Some of the girl children are surprisingly attractive, clad in shapeless nightdress garments, brightly coloured ; with ear-rings and nose-rings and rows of tinkling glass bangles. All look healthy and well formed, in spite of in-breeding (the fisher-folk do not intermarry with the Bedouin). Perhaps their superior physique is due in part to their all-fish diet. A few of the grown women have remnants of their childish good looks, but mostly they are hags—shapeless bundles draped in dirty black, with little attempt at veiling ; only if you catch their glance, they will hurriedly draw the headcloth over their faces and turn away.

Clutching as many belongings as we can, and leaving the rest to the crew to bring along, we set off down the beach to our camp-site. Like the Pied Piper we are followed by all the children. We break the ice by handing out old tennis balls, especially brought for this purpose—a brain-wave on somebody's part. In a moment of abandon, two of us join hands and start to skip along the shore ; immediately the children follow suit, with much giggling and chatter, and the hopping of dozens of little bare feet makes a queer 'frou-frou' noise on the hard sand. Having decided exactly where we are going to camp, it is no easy matter to shake off our following, and we have to call the crew to our aid, who successfully 'shoo' them away with what we take to be horrible threats delivered in terrifying roars. Gathering their ragged garments (if any) around them, they take to their heels and run—but only as far as a near-by hillock, where they take up a strong position from which they can watch our every movement : only some of the bigger boys remain below, playing football with our tennis balls.

Our 'camp' consists of one small tent for the ladies ; in

it there is just room—and only just—for three camp-beds, one across the end, the other two close up against it with their heads towards the opening ; there is no space to walk between the beds, and toilets have to be performed outside. The men put up their beds in the open, a little farther inland. All this has to be done hurriedly, before the sun sets and leaves us in darkness. When all is settled for the night, we can sit back and take our ease with a much-needed ‘ sun-downer.’ Behind us, rising steeply from sea-level, are the unfriendly crags of Little Aden ; in front, the sands gleam white in the half-light, sweeping round a long bay, as far as the eye can reach, to the rocks of Ras Imran. The sky is still a luminous pale green low down in the west, though overhead it is already night and the velvet blue-black depths are reflected in the sea below. The dhow is lying at anchor where we can see her graceful lines in silhouette, ‘ with few, but with how splendid stars ’ appearing one by one in the darkening sky beyond her.

A little way up the steep sandy slope behind us the boys have lit a fire, and the evening meal is being prepared. We sniff the air hungrily. Food plays an important part in camp life, and the simpler it is the better—and how one does eat ! Sprawling in a circle round a petrolmax lamp we consume vast quantities of bully-beef stew and sand, washed down with beer, and more sand. Well nourished, inevitably we burst into song, shattering the peace with horrid noise, and the echoes go rollicking off into the hills.

Before turning in we take a stroll along the beach and climb the rocky headland that rises between us and the village where we landed. Although it is not later than half-past nine, there is not a light to be seen, not a sound to be heard, not a movement. We are disappointed in the night-life of Little Aden, and turn back towards the camp.

The crew, with the Somali boys, are squatting round the glowing embers of the fire, a circle of silhouettes casting distorted shadows on the sand. Sea and shore are merged in blackness, except where the ripples break in phosphorescence along the beach.

The ladies retire to the shelter of their tent, and the men to their row of beds, looking for all the world like a dormitory for small boys, ridiculously incomplete without its confining walls. Last good nights are shouted and lamps extinguished, and infinite quiet descends. The only sound is the swish and gurgle of the incoming tide, and what lullaby could be more satisfying?

Our last waking memory is of a line of camels in the black distance, striding silently out of the darkness into a deeper darkness beyond: but we are too sleepy to wonder where they are going, or from whence they came. They are 'the stuff which dreams are made on' and we pass into blissful unconsciousness.

Like the last, our first impression is also of camels. In the grey light of dawn, grunting and complaining as their masters goad them along, they do not appear quite so idyllic. They are miserable, mangy brutes, and very smelly, and they have woken us up with their vulgar babbings. Nevertheless, once we have shaken off the sense of injury we are grateful to the camels for having roused us. For this is not a time of day to be missed: there is almost a nip in the air, which is most exhilarating. The new-born sun is kindly, giving youth and freshness to a haggard land. Presently it will become a ball of fire, sapping vitality, but as yet it is a friendly thing, spreading a genial warmth, dispersing blue shadows and discovering hazy outlines. Waiting for breakfast, it is delightful to contemplate the long peaceful day's fishing which lies ahead. No need to worry about that

arch-villain, Time, no hurrying back for meals (we will cook the fish we catch). To-day will be our own. Whatever has gone before, or is to come, we do not care. With true Oriental fatalism we are determined upon our philosophy :

*' Unborn to-morrow and dead yesterday,  
Why fret about them, if to-day be sweet ? '*

All too soon we will have to pack up and return to civilisation, a little tired and infinitely dirty, but with a satisfying sense of fulfilment and refreshment. We have had a glorious time. Other expeditions have been more enterprising, more exciting, have lasted longer : but we were not ambitious, and we have done what we set out to do. We have been peaceful and unhurried and care-free. There has been no hitch, no snag—and we shall yet get home, insha 'Allah, without having recourse to Achmed's raft.

## II.

Ten o'clock of a fine Sunday morning ; zero hour. We pile ourselves and the lunch into two cars, and take the road. Winding through Hejuf, down the Ma'alla straight out on to the Isthmus ; the R.A.F. Station at Khormaksar flashes by, and we speed along the level road to Sheikh Othman, salt marshes on either hand enveloping us in their rank, stale odour. A belt of greenery ahead proclaims the oasis, and taking a left fork of the road we find ourselves in the main street of Sheikh Othman. It is Bedlam. We steer a zig-zag course, playing a tune on the motor-horn, dodging pedestrians and camel-carts, nosing our way through flocks of sheep, swerving round stray donkeys and goats ; pulling up short to avoid moon-struck Bedouin, gaping wide-eyed—for to these wild-looking, half-clothed tribesmen from the

hills, with rifles slung over their shoulders, white men—and more especially white women—are still curiosities. The more sophisticated town-bred Arabs and Somalis pass by without a glance ; a khaki-clad policeman in a red tarbush waves an ineffective truncheon, and we cut across the bows of a heavily laden camel, which refuses to alter its pace, and sways majestically on its way, treating us with more scorn than we really deserve.

Along the right-hand side of the wide road are booths and cafés, humanity surging round them in all the noisy picturesque colourful filth of an Eastern bazaar. To the left is an open space, dotted with sad-looking trees in whose inadequate shade are tethered donkeys and mules, and kneeling camels, munching placidly in groups—and everywhere there are goats of every hue, and yet more goats. Here the caravans come in and unload—from Lahej and the hills beyond, and the distant mountains of the Yemen, and the far borders of the Protectorate. Slowly and unhurriedly they have wound their way through the mountainous country, following routes that were old in Bible times and that have not changed since. Nowadays one can follow most of the main routes by car, gaining perhaps in speed, but not in comfort, and still the camel and the donkey reign supreme.

Farther on, we come to where long strips of dyed material—gay reds and blues and yellows—are laid out in the sun to dry. Everything is covered in fine dust, and the smells never become monotonous in their infinite variety. It is a gay scene, and a good-natured easy-going crowd, and after all we are in no hurry. Contenting ourselves with second gear, we thread our way through, and presently, taking a sharp left-hand turn, find ourselves off the main thoroughfare, on the road to Hiswa. 'Road' is perhaps only a com-



parative term ; in England it would be called a track, and considered quite unfit for cars. The pot-holes are sometimes large, sometimes small ; the ruts are sometimes wide, sometimes narrow ; the motion is irregular and interesting. It is impossible to tell what the next hazard will be, and driving requires more than usual care and concentration. A sand-drift must be spotted ahead and taken at speed, or we may find our wheels churning impotently and awake to the horrid realisation that we are stuck—or a sickening thud on the springs will draw our attention to a pot-hole that we didn't see in time. Screams from the back seats will indicate that our passengers have been in imminent danger of going through the roof and are ungratefully demanding that we give them new topees.

For a while the road is uninteresting, a desert track bordered by sand and low scrub, but ahead we can see trees, and presently, rounding a bend, we come upon the little green oasis of Hiswa. A cluster of graceful 'toddy' palms, almost a 'wood,' unbelievable blue depths of shade, trees, real trees ! It is impossible to realise the delight of this meagre patch of greenery unless you have lived in a land devoid of it. In the midst of a brazen landscape, it is luxury indeed to feast one's eyes on the soft tones of green—so, for a while, we rest here, loth to leave the twisted 'toddies' and their feathery top-knots, grateful to their kindly shadows.

Emerging from the trees to higher ground, we get a wide view. Northward stretches the desert, rolling away to the foot-hills of the Yemen ranges, to the south is the sea, with the Barren Rocks beyond. It is a curiously one-dimensional scene, laid on with a clean brush in flat tones of blue. The sea is a deeper shade than the sky, Aden itself a half-tone between the two, but there is no depth, no

shadows to give it substance or to lend perspective. It is a Paul Henry landscape, lovely but lifeless, fascinating to the eye by its very lack of detail, its bold clear lines and washes of pure colour.

There is not much traffic. We pass a small caravan, four camels nose-to-tail, a small boy walking in front, mother and father humped on their respective beasts. A solitary camel trotting fast shies badly as we come up behind and nearly topples his rider into the sand. A native taxi, piled high with humanity, passengers clinging to every part of it, swerves off the road for us to pass, and disappears, hooting madly, and at break-neck speed, raising a wall of dust behind it. Some miles before we come to it, we can see before us what looks like a sign-post, and as we approach, we find our eyes have not deceived us—it is a sign-post! A lonely civilised thing, pointing desperately to left and right in an arid wilderness. Being sticklers for such things, we flip out our traffic indicator, and take the right fork, turning north-west, our backs towards Aden now. The other track would have led us to the salt works; the dazzling pyramids of salt stand out against the blue background of Little Aden, they dance and glitter in the shimmering air and their brilliance hurts the eyes, intensified, as it is, by mirage. The marshes are multiplied a score of times, producing the effect of a chain of salt-lagoons—at times it seems the road must cut through them, but as one approaches, the illusion goes. We can indulge in a burst of speed here, reaching at least thirty miles per hour, as the surface is of baked mud and at intervals quite smooth. Crossing the level plain the sea is once more before us, and as we near the beach, we can see our boat lying at anchor; she has been sailed round here the night before, to be in readiness for our arrival.

The road sweeps on right-handed, but we leave it here,

and turn towards Little Aden and the sea, going as far along the shore as we deem it wise on the soft sand. The crew have seen us and, headed by the shrivelled monkey who is our 'skipper,' come running towards the cars. They are not alone. Accompanying them are all the able-bodied inhabitants, male, female and infant, of the fishing village which lies hidden behind a rocky headland that juts into the sea, a hundred yards or so ahead. No doubt to these simple isolated people we present the same thrill as a travelling circus to an English village. Motor-cars are by no means an everyday occurrence, and to see them moving backwards causes a perceptible tremor through the crowd of children who are watching our manoeuvres wide-eyed. Even to ourselves, our general appearance is slightly exotic. Open-necked shirts and shorts—the women of the party in long trousers—surmounted by topees and dark glasses, add little to one's personal allurements, and to these children of nature, clothed simply in rags, or not at all, we must seem quite horrible, and not a little ridiculous. We prove an irresistible attraction, however, and are escorted to the water's edge by the entire gathering. Here we embark in a large dug-out canoe and are paddled slowly out to the dhow. The long yard is already hoisted, the sail reefed up to it with strips of dried grass, so that it needs only a jerk on the sheet to free it, and we are under way.

A stiff following wind lends us wings, so that we seem to skim over the surface of the smooth sea rather than plough through it. There is an exhilarating sense of speed and lightness that only a sailing boat can give ; one does not get it in an aeroplane, which is a soulless thing. In the air one is superior and detached and perhaps a little godlike, but in a boat one is alive, earth-bound, but free, and the boat is exultingly—and sometimes exasperatingly—alive too. We

fill our lungs, and sing 'Speed bonnie boat like a bird on the wing,' in rousing chorus, and caught up by our enthusiasm, the crew give voice to a rhythmic chant—a never-ending ballad centred round the exploits of a gentleman named Bin Dor—and it, too, has a lilt of the sea in it.

Our destination lies four or five miles out to sea; a curious yellow bump on the horizon, like a haystack that has lost its way. It is the island, Hollow Island, that we are bound for. The result of some monstrous volcanic upheaval, Hollow Island, as we come nearer, looks more like a coco-nut than a haystack—a gigantic coco-nut hurled into the sea by some playful god. One can almost hear the shout of Olympian laughter that went up at the splash it must have made. The side we approach is smooth and steep and honey-coloured, but we lower the sail and paddle gently round to the entrance of the cave. Here the aspect changes. From being inanimate, Hollow Island becomes alive; a titanic sea-monster with yawning jaws ready to snap down upon us as, unsuspecting midgets, we slip into its very maw. The line of shadow falls clear-cut across the entrance, and coming out of dazzling sunlight, it is as if we had shut a door behind us. At first it is impossible to see anything in the thick darkness, but slowly our eyes become accustomed, and we see a vaulted roof above us, falling gradually to a passage a few feet high which passes into the very heart of the island, losing itself in deep purple shadows that we would not care to investigate alone, for fear of what might lurk within. The ceiling is hung with thousands upon thousands of bats, and sitting on a ledge is an ancient sea-bird which rises at our approach and flaps by us with a melancholy cry. Beneath us is the sea, 'the dragon-green, the luminous, the dark, the serpent-haunted'; it is mirror-clear, and we can see every pebble at the bottom of its

twelve or fourteen fathoms, and every fish that swims. The eerie, slightly uneasy feeling of having intruded where we are not wanted soon disappears with the excitement of catching fish. Fairy-tale fish ! We pull them out with almost every cast. All sizes, shapes and colours, and each one different from the last. Sometimes one can hardly believe that they are true—electric blues and greens, brilliant reds and yellows, in symmetrical stripes and spots and circles, such as no human artist could conceive in his wildest imaginings. It becomes a game to mark down a fish, dangling the bait temptingly before his nose. There are cunning big fellows, smoky-blue, that hug the bottom and are difficult to catch ; higher up are the silly little tiddlers that nibble nervously at the dainty morsel, darting away in a flash of light as some bigger one shoulders them out of the way and swallows the bait with a snap in a swirl of green water. It is fascinating beyond description, this strange under-sea world that one can watch as clearly as if one was in a diving-bell, and even when the fish go off the take—which they do at intervals for ten minutes or so at a time—one's interest never slackens, and only the pangs of hunger make one draw in the lines, and call a truce for lunch.

Half an hour's interval, and we are at it again. But enthusiasm is noticeably on the wane, even the fish appear less eager. Some of us unashamedly give way to that after-lunch feeling, and closing the eyes, snooze contentedly. Conversation lapses, and lines dangle slackly. The sun, creeping westward, has discovered our retreat and is encroaching on the shadows, turning the cool green water to molten metal, flashing his searchlight into the hidden recesses of this secret place—making of it a sweltering oven where we gasp for breath in the heavy used-up air, and sweat gathers on the brow. It is time to move, and we are as

eager to quit this inferno as we were enthusiastic to enter, when it was all blue-green depths and shadows. But first the catch must be counted ; a hundred, a hundred and fifty, two hundred—the figures mount fabulously, and we sit back well content with the day's slaughter, and give the order to up-anchor. We slide quickly back into the reality of sea and wind and open sky. The breeze has freshened since the morning, whipping the sea into short steep waves through which the boat plunges and staggers uncomfortably. Occasionally we ship one green, and the ' skipper,' squatting in the bows, glares round at the helmsman like an angry monkey, freezing the laughter on our lips with his ' We are not amused ' expression. With a strong head-wind against us, we have to make wide tacks, so that the homeward journey takes twice as long as the outward. After half an hour of uneasy motion, we become conscious that all is not quite well with some members of the party. There is a certain listlessness, a noticeable lack of *joie de vivre*—until first one, and then another, hastily subsides, stretching out on the benches running down each side of the open boat. What humour is there in sea-sickness, toothache, and falling downstairs that calls forth unseemly mirth even in the most humane ? Is it a ' there-but-for-the-God ' feeling that finds expression in unchristian jests and jibes ? We cannot say ; but we, who enjoy the rough and tumble of a rollicking sea, are brutally unsympathetic. The crew put us to shame with their tender solicitude for the victims, round whom they rig a sail-shelter, whether to guard them from the scorching sun or the horrible sight of their compatriots sucking oranges, we are not quite sure.

At last, after an hour or more of open sea, we come under the lee of the land, and our buffetings cease. The corpses revive, taking new lease of life, and even joining in

our noisy and not very tuneful choruses. We make our landfall in good order, and as we come into shallow waters the 'skipper' (surprisingly, to those who have not seen this manœuvre before) springs overboard, clasping the anchor to his bosom, swims leisurely under water, and eventually places it firmly behind a convenient rock. Returning to the boat, he shakes himself dry like a dog, and resumes command.

Packing up and getting ashore is a slow business that gives the villagers ample time to muster in full strength for our reception. We are an even less inspiring sight than before, being now both dirty and dishevelled, but evidently we have lost none of our fatal fascination. We plough stiffly through the soft sand back to the cars, leaving the crew in charge of the boat. They will have a 'gala' dinner on Little Aden to-night, and sail home in the early hours of the morning. Already the shadows are lengthening, colours deepening, and the sky is a blaze of glory. Night descends swiftly in these latitudes, and we still have far to go. Scrambling quickly into the cars, we wave a friendly 'au revoir' to the fisher-folk and take the long desert road. Our backs to the sunset and the evening star, we make across the level plain, towards the darkening horizon.

*'Void now, and tenebrous the gray sands curve before me. . . .  
Eastward I turn, and homeward, alone remembering—  
Day that I loved, day that I loved, the Night is here !'*

RANDOM MUSINGS OF A SEMI-VEGETARIAN.

*Though I do not hold with bigots, who swear by joints and gigots,  
Yet, were I forced to visit butchers' shops  
To choose the raw materials for my fare, I'd turn to cereals  
For my sustenance, or even turnip tops.*

*I confess as I grow older that I turn a colder shoulder  
To the lure of beef, of mutton, or of veal,  
And in the wide variety of vegetarian diet, I  
Now find a far more intimate appeal.*

*On a regimen leguminous my brain becomes more luminous ;  
By the sages of the past I am unawed,  
And resolutely scorning Pythagoras's warning<sup>1</sup>  
I batten upon beans when they are broad.*

*Green artichokes are splendid and most cordially commended  
By epicures, who delicately dine,  
But the 'choke that seems beholden to Jerusalem the Golden  
Is erroneously linked with Palestine.*

*Bees may frequent my bonnet, but I neither scorn the sonnet  
Nor the carrot, though it doesn't charm my tongue :  
Its qualities arsenical may at times be hygienical,  
But I like it best when it is very young.*

<sup>1</sup> 'Abstain from beans.'



*The parsnip's most nutritious, but to say that it's delicious  
 Is to me a glaring inexactitude :  
 Though it might have proved enthusing to Nebuchadnezzar,  
     musing  
 As he munched his wholesome unaccustomed food.*

*The spinach in its succulence does not conduce to truculence,  
 But leaves a healing influence in its track ;  
 And the French, so realistic and seldom euphemistic,  
 Have called it le balai de l'estomac.*

*Plums, fresh or from the bottle, gently titillate my throttle ;  
 Ripe strawberries in the pottle are a dream ;  
 And I'd gladly write a slogan for the raspberry or logan  
     Au naturel or glorified by cream.*

*The pear for railway travelling is beyond the reach of cavilling,  
 It satisfies both thirst and appetite ;  
 While the common railway sandwich is mostly of a brand which  
 Is void of all gustatory delight.*

*When given a raw banana I am moved to say mañana  
 And defer the eating till I feel inclined ;  
 But it is a first-rate mixer and provides a fine elixir  
     For salads of the tutti frutti kind.*

*But a truce to idle rhyming, for the beatific chiming  
 Of the dinner-bell falls sweetly on my ear ;  
 And I hasten to the staying of my hunger and allaying  
     Of my thirst with flagons of the best of beer.*

C. L. GRAVES.

## *THE CORAL SNAKES.*

BY 'TANJONG.'

AMONG the many thousand islands in the Eastern Pacific there is one of exceptional beauty, and in case you protest that this description applies to the majority, I will tell you why this one is exceptional.

In shape it is just like the new moon in the summer sky, a very curly, crescent moon with one horn topped by three feathery palms. A coral bar stretching across to the other horn serves to break the force of the Pacific rollers—when there are rollers—and outside this bar the water is the deep blue of delphiniums, while inside it is just the colour you will see in a piece of broken glass bottle when you look at it edgewise. Inside this lagoon there is a stretch of sand, pearly white at the water's edge, grading through pale yellow and deep gold to an iridescent purple under the high part of the island where palms and flowering trees surround a single slab of white coral, standing upright like a kitchen-table turned on end.

Once a passing warship banged away half a dozen shells at this natural target and so shattered the nerves of the island birds that they have never quite forgotten it, and to this day a small fall of rock will cause them to rise in a screaming, rainbow-hued cloud.

Should you ever come to this island you will probably recognise it by my description, but you must never try to land there, for it is the home of the coral snakes. They are there in hundreds of thousands, on the sands, under the

rocks, in the trees, everywhere. They and the nervous birds are the only inhabitants, unless you count the fat, lazy sharks that bask outside the reef and the vultures who visit the island occasionally to see if there is anything exciting in the way of lunch.

If you are foolish enough to venture ashore, the coral snakes will probably bite you and then you will go to sleep and never wake up again. Not that they are vicious ; they are merely curious to see the effect of their bite on a new subject.

They are also curious to know just what is going on in the outside world and have waited many years for someone to come and tell them. Sometimes when the blue sea turns to greeny-grey-black and the big rollers try to leap over the coral bar and sweep away the three palms, things come ashore, but only interesting to the vultures.

One day, far out beyond the bar, there appeared a speck which came closer and closer, until it materialised into a small boat with a man in it. When he reached the coral bar he found he could neither pass through nor pull the boat over, so he got out on the reef, stripped off all his clothes except a leather belt with a sheath knife and swam for the beach. He came hand over hand, tossing up little sprays of water which flashed in the sunlight like scattered gems, until he reached the sand, and there he sat down and gazed at the horizon.

The little coral snakes were tremendously excited. Here, at last, was someone who could tell them about the outside world, so they all rustled down the beach and crowded round him, but the man appeared not to notice them and remained gazing out to sea.

One of the little snakes crawled over his ankle and another squirmed on to his bare knee. The man glanced down and

said 'Hallo, you funny little beggars !' and once more turned his eyes to the sea.

At last they became impatient and nipped his toes to attract his attention ; the man merely sighed, stretched himself out on the sand and went to sleep.

He lay there so quiet and still that a vulture sitting on the rocks decided that his attitude was interesting and worth investigation, so he spread his wings and flopped on the sand beside him, but the coral snakes were jealous for their newly found treasure and one of them struck the vulture in the face. The bird squawked once with surprise and collapsed into a ragged heap.

Presently a second vulture swooped down, only to share the fate of his stricken brother. Then came a third, sailing high up, a speck in the blue vault. He saw the outstretched man and dropped like a stone from the sky, but as he touched the sand two snakes sprang and struck together. The bird wheeled, hit the face of the rock and came to earth like a crashed 'plane.

After that there were no more intruders, and the man slept.

He slept for a whole week and the little coral snakes sat round him and waited for what they knew would happen.

One morning the man stirred, sat up and rubbed his eyes. He looked at the coral bar and the three palms, then he looked down at the sand and saw the little coral snakes sitting round him. 'Hallo !' he said. 'So you're still here. What are you waiting for ?'

'We wait for you to speak, O man,' answered the snakes. (Somehow he was not a bit surprised to hear them talking.) 'We want you to tell us all about the big world from whence you came and how you came and why ?'

‘Very well,’ said the man. ‘But I must first find some water—I am thirsty.’

As he rose to his feet the big leather belt with the sheath knife slipped from him and fell on the sand among a little heap of crooked white sticks which lay exactly on the spot where he had slept. He saw the little rill of water which splashed down the rocks and went to it with all the little snakes rustling behind him. When he had drunk his fill he gathered an armful of fruit and sat on the sand to eat it: the little snakes watched him patiently until he had finished, then they all cried together: ‘Now, tell us your story.’

‘I wish I had my pipe,’ said the man, but as he had left it in his clothes on the reef it was no use wishing, so he started to tell the coral snakes this story.

‘It is just six years ago since I left England. Life had treated me shabbily, for in one year I lost first my money, then my good name and then my wife, so that I had nothing left but my little daughter. I realised that my chances were finished as far as England was concerned, so leaving my little girl with a relative, I sailed South hoping to make a quick fortune and return to fetch her. After five years of up-and-down luck I threw in my lot with three men who owned a small trading vessel in the islands. One day we were caught in a typhoon and before we could run for shelter the boat was hurled on a reef and smashed. I was struck on the head by a falling spar and thrown into the sea. I recovered my senses on the beach of a small island very much like this; I was bruised and stiff from my rough treatment by the seas and I slept until next day in the shelter of the trees. I was ravenously hungry when I awoke and realised that I’d better get a quick knowledge of the island’s resources. There was plenty of fruit, but it was poor rations

for a hungry man, so with the hope of finding some shell-fish I returned to the reef.

'The tide was ebbing and in the swirl of the water I saw, on the extreme point of the reef, something which I made out to be the fore-part of a vessel wedged firmly in the rocks. At first I thought it might be the hulk of our schooner, but as it was still awash I could not be certain. At any rate I was determined to investigate it in the hope of finding something useful, and when the whole reef was uncovered by the receding tide, I scrambled over the rocks.

'It was not our schooner, but an old wreck which had evidently been there for some months.

'The sides were slippery with weed, and when I at last managed to reach the deck it seemed as if I had wasted my effort, for the seas had swept her bare. Looking aft I saw the roof of a deck-house, still half-submerged, and waiting until the water had fallen I crawled down the slippery deck. On my way I picked up an iron bar, and with this I smashed open the door and found myself in the skipper's cabin. Everything was waterlogged and covered with green slime, there was apparently nothing worth taking, but as I turned to leave I noticed a closed locker and with my iron bar I prised it open. It was full of charts and papers, all so rotten with sea-water that they fell to pieces when I threw them out. Then under all this rubbish I found a wooden box. It was locked, but my iron bar quickly knocked it apart, revealing a mass of shining, green stones.

'I recognised them at once as emeralds of fine size and quality and I wondered how such a treasure came to be left behind when the crew escaped, if escape they did.

'As I sat on the floor turning over the jewels, the incoming tide trickling through the planks of the deck-house warned me that it was time to leave ; so, tying the stones in my shirt

and taking the iron bar, I returned to the beach. In the excitement of my find I had forgotten the main object of my visit to the rocks until my stomach began to grumble, and then I went down to the pools and collected shell-fish.

‘The prospect of raw shell-fish was not over-attractive, so with my iron bar and a flint I managed to ignite a heap of palm fibre. The fire gave me an idea. I piled driftwood on it, and when it was blazing I threw on an armful of damp seaweed which raised a column of smoke that could have been seen for miles. For a whole week I kept up this smoke signal without any success, and then one morning I saw a ship standing in to the island. She saw my signal and sent a boat ashore and an hour later I was once more a free man.

‘She was a fair-sized trading schooner carrying a crew of eight men ; a set of devil-may-care ruffians, but I was only too glad to get away from the island and I bargained with the skipper for a passage to the nearest port where I could get a ship to England.

‘At first they took little interest in me, but one day I foolishly let them get a glimpse of my treasure, and the trouble started. The skipper, who was as big a scoundrel as any of them, suggested that I should share my find with them. Of course I refused. I pointed out that I was willing to pay a good price for my passage but they had no claim on my property, and when he hinted that, as far as the world knew, neither I nor my treasure still existed, I understood that he would not stop at murder to possess the stones. I also realised that the only safe place for them was on my person, so I stole a big leather belt with pouches, filled it with the stones and wore it under my shirt. I also took a sheath knife so that I should not be altogether unarmed if they attacked me. My chief concern was that my treasure should ultimately reach my little girl, and with that end in view I

wrote her name and address and a request to the finder, whoever he might be, to deliver the contents of the belt to her. This I sewed in a piece of oil-skin and placed in one of the pouches.

'Although the crew made no open attack on me, accidents began to happen with unpleasant frequency. A heavy block was dropped from aloft and struck the deck between my feet, and on another occasion I barely escaped the crashing swing of the boom when the mainsail was gybed without warning. At last I determined to get away on the first opportunity. I had noticed that the ship's dinghy was always atow, and seizing a moment when the men were all forward, I slid down the painter into the boat. Two minutes later I had cut the rope and was some hundreds of yards astern of the ship, which was moving before a steady breeze. I had no food, only a small bottle of water, and was quite out of the ordinary track of shipping, but I considered that my chances of life were better adrift than with that crew of rascals.

'All that night I drifted about and the following morning I sighted this island. The rest of the story you know.'

The man yawned and stretched himself. 'There,' said he, pointing to the belt on the sand, 'is my treasure, and here am I as far away from home as ever. And I do wish I had my pipe.'

'And what are you going to do now?' asked the little coral snakes.

'Watch for another ship to take me home,' he replied.

'No, you cannot go!' cried the snakes.

'Cannot go, eh?' echoed the man. 'We'll see about that,' and he jumped up with the intention of swimming out to the boat which he hoped would still be on the coral bar, but when he reached down to pick up the belt, his



fingers seemed to pass clean through and he realised what had happened to him. He went back to the snakes and sat down.

‘You are right,’ he said sadly. ‘I understand now why I can never leave this island, but if a ship should come this way, what is to prevent me from hailing it and asking the skipper to deliver the belt to the address in England?’

‘They would not see you, they could not hear you,’ said the snakes.

‘Yes, that’s true,’ replied the man. ‘But if some honest seaman should come ashore, he might find the belt and carry out my wishes without the asking.’

‘No one who puts foot on this island can ever go away again,’ said the snakes. ‘We see to that.’

‘Let us make a bargain,’ suggested the man. ‘If someone comes ashore and we know by his actions that he is an honest man, let him take the belt; but if we judge him to be a rogue, then you shall deal with him.’

‘Agreed, agreed!’ cried all the little coral snakes.

A year passed, another was on the wane and the belt still lay on the sand, but one afternoon as the man was watching the sea rippling in the sunshine, a boat rigged with a leg-o’-mutton sail appeared round the corner of the island. It zigzagged up and down as if completely out of control, struck heavily on the reef and by great luck drifted through the only channel to the calm waters of the lagoon.

Here one of the two occupants lowered the sail while the other punted the boat to the sand. Then they hauled her clear of the water to examine the damage caused by the coral. It amounted to a couple of burst planks, but the two sailors were evidently not in the mood to work on the repairs; instead, they pulled out a spirit keg and a pannikin which they filled and swigged turn and turn about.

Soon the hot sun and the spirit began to take effect and they commenced to curse the heat and the boat and the reef. Then they cursed each other with many quaint oaths and would have fought, only they were too tipsy to hit each other. So they tried to dance until one of them fell and, pulling his mate with him, rolled on the sand and slept where they lay.

Then the man and the little snakes came down the beach to inspect their visitors. They looked like a pair of Calibans stranded by the tide and snored so loudly that even the vultures were afraid to come near them. The little snakes crawled over their faces and tickled their noses, but they only snored the louder, so the man and the little snakes left them alone and returned to the rocks to watch.

When the first rays of morning sunshine slanted across the island one of the seamen awoke. He was very thirsty and the first thing he did was to tilt the spirit keg over his mouth, but there was not a drop left. Then he espied the little stream running over the rocks, and picking up the pannikin he lumbered over the beach to where it formed a pool. He drank and drank as if his thirst was unquenchable, then he dipped his frowsy head into the pool, and feeling refreshed he started back to his companion. As he stumbled down the sand his toe struck against some object. It was a sheath knife and in pulling at it he uncovered a leather belt.

The knife was rusted and useless and the belt rotted with the sea-water. He was about to fling it away when a brilliant green stone fell at his feet. He picked it up and examined it, then he hastily tore open one of the pouches and gave a shout of surprise. It awoke his companion, who sat up, blinking his eyes. 'What yer found, Jim?' he asked.

'Nothing,' replied the other, hastily stuffing the belt inside his jacket. 'Only an old sheath knife.'

'Then what are yer howlin' about?' said the first.

'Hurt my foot on a rock.'

'Serves yer right, walking about disturbing people at this time of day. What yer after?'

'Water.'

'Water!' echoed the other, scrambling to his feet. 'My gosh! Where is it?'

'Over there by the rocks,' said Jim. 'Ere catch,' and he tossed the pannikin to his mate, who hurried off to cool his parched mouth. Jim watched him until he had disappeared over the crest of the beach; then he hid behind a rock and once more opened the belt.

As each pouch revealed its glittering treasure he grunted with delight and swore viciously when the rusted fasteners resisted his clumsy fingers.

A hairy fist reached over his shoulder, snatching the belt from his hand, and his mate's voice snarled: 'This is yer nothing, is it? Thought yer'd cheat yer partner, eh?'

'I didn't know what was in it,' lied Jim.

'Well, yer know now,' said the other, 'and we're goin' fifty-fifty in this, see?' He started to stuff the emeralds back into the pouches.

'Here, what are you doing?' asked Jim. 'Let's divide 'em here and now.'

'No, we don't,' replied his mate, buckling on the belt. 'Tide'll be high in half an hour, and if we don't want to stick for ever on this rotten island we've got to mend the boat and be off, so get a move on and we'll divide when we get back to the ship.'

Jim grumbled fiercely as he followed his mate to the beach, and started to help with the damaged boat. The

other, grasping the keel under the forefoot, told him to slip a stretcher underneath as he heaved the boat up, but Jim, instead of doing what he was told, seized the heavy bar of wood and brought it down with all his force on the other's bent head, killing him instantly.

Next moment he was down on his knees wrenching at the belt buckle, but even as he dragged it from the dead body, something sharp struck him on the hand, then another on the face and another and another. He sprang up with a yell of terror, tearing at the little snakes which were clinging to every bare inch of skin, his knees gave way suddenly and he fell writhing across his murdered mate.

An hour later a coroner's jury of vultures were holding an autopsy and this time the little coral snakes did not interfere ; they liked their island to be neat and tidy.

And next day the belt lay on the sand and the man looked at it and sighed because it seemed that no honest man would come to the island.

Six months later a beautiful steam yacht anchored off the island and from her side came a boat rowed by four sailors. They brought her straight through the gap in the reef and beached her without as much as a graze on her paint and out of it stepped two men. One of them was the captain of the yacht, the other, who was quite a young man, was the owner. ‘By jove !’ he exclaimed. ‘This is the prettiest island of the lot.’

‘Pretty enough,’ replied the captain, ‘but it has an ugly reputation. It is supposed to be inhabited by ghosts and snakes. No one ever comes here.’

‘I'm not afraid of ghosts or snakes,’ laughed the young man, ‘and it looks to me as if there is someoné here. See that boat ?’

‘That’s strange,’ said the captain. ‘We haven’t sighted a vessel for two days and there’s no inhabited island within a hundred miles. Suppose we investigate.’

They walked along the beach to the stranded boat and saw the bleached skeletons lying in a jumbled heap under its bows. ‘There seems to have been some dirty work,’ remarked the captain, pointing to the crushed skull. ‘I wonder how the other fellow died.’

Then the young man saw the belt, and was stooping to pick it up when a snake scuttled away from under it. ‘Be careful,’ warned the captain. ‘Those little beggars are deadly poisonous.’ He kicked the belt with his foot to dislodge any other lurking snakes, and the belt being quite rotten by now, the kick burst the pouches and sent a shower of glittering stones rolling on the sand.

The captain picked up a handful. ‘Emeralds, by gosh!’ he exclaimed. ‘And beauties. I wonder where these fellows got ’em.’

And there, a few yards away, but invisible to mortal eyes, stood one who could have answered had he had a voice audible to human ears.

Meanwhile the little coral snakes, fidgety and suspicious as ever, wriggled down the beach to cut off the retreat of the intruders. ‘Not yet!’ cried the man. ‘Wait and see what they intend to do.’ And the little snakes waited.

From the last pouch the captain drew the oilskin packet: he ripped it open, read the enclosure and handed it to his companion.

‘What do you make of this?’ he asked.

‘H’m,’ replied the other. ‘It looks as if somebody’s fortune has gone astray. I wonder when this was written—there’s no date.’

‘What are you going to do with these?’ asked the

captain, pointing to the gems. 'The girl may be dead long ago, and what then?'

'We are going to find her if she is still alive,' said the young man. 'At any rate, we will try to carry out this poor chap's wishes. There's my specimen box in the boat's locker—it will just about hold the stones.'

They fetched the box and filled it with the emeralds. 'Lock these in your safe,' he said, handing it to the captain, but the paper he put carefully away in his pocket-book.

'Well,' he remarked as they once more returned to the boat, 'we've certainly found the beauties of the island, but what about its dangers? I haven't seen many snakes.'

'Then look there.' The captain pointed to the crest of the beach where the little coral snakes were beginning to appear in hundreds, but what they could not see was the figure of a man dancing for joy because an honest man had at last come to the island.

That night, when the yacht was steaming far away from the island, the captain sat alone in his cabin. His eyes were closed and his thoughts were on the emeralds. Emeralds! Flashes of green fire passed behind his closed lids: he could not turn his mind away from them. The desire to handle them again was so insistent that at last he rose and took the box from the safe. What an extraordinary find, and what a fortune for some unknown and unknowing girl. He picked out one of the larger stones and balanced it in the palm of his hand. The value of that one stone would mean affluence to him for the rest of his life. Just that one stone out of all that mass would never be missed. They had not been counted. And if one, why not two, or even more?

He bolted the door and drew the curtains over the port lights, then he arranged the stones in groups on the table according to their size. From these he selected five of the

finest and slipped them into his pocket, but as he was about to replace the others, a slight movement in the box attracted his attention. He bent over it, and next moment something swift and living struck him in the face. He sprang from his chair and staggered across the cabin, screaming and tearing at his face with his hands. A minute later he collapsed and his convulsed body rolled under the table.

They had to burst open the door to get into the cabin, and the first to enter was the young man. His glance fell on the body under the table and the scattered gems and he slammed the door on the startled faces in the alleyway.

As he lifted the dead captain, five emeralds trickled out of his pocket and the young man understood. He wrenched the hands from the distorted face and from under them fell the crushed remains of a little coral snake.

And now, say you, that's a-plenty of death and bloody violence, so overboard it goes with the shrouded remains of the unfortunate captain, and yo-ho ! for a happy ending.

Of course every one of you knows just how this story finishes ; how the young man returned to England and found the girl, and how she was very poor and very pretty, and worked in a shop. And of course you've guessed that they fell in love and were married and lived expensively ever after. But what you do not know is this :

Six months later when the sun was still shining on little green waves still rippling in that very same lagoon, that very same steam yacht anchored off the island and from her side came a boat rowed by four sailors who beached it on the shining sand. Out of the boat stepped two people. One of them was the young man, and the other the young girl. She called him ' Bill ' because she had a perfect right to, and he called her ' Mary ' because she was his wife.

' Why, this is the prettiest island of the lot,' she exclaimed.

‘That is one reason why I brought you here,’ said he, ‘the other being that it is here, right under your feet, where I found your father’s legacy to you.’

The girl’s eyes filled with tears and she stretched out her arms to the trees. ‘Daddy!’ she called, and the answer seemed to come back, ‘Mary!’

‘Did you hear that?’ she exclaimed. ‘Oh, Bill, there is someone here and he answered me.’

‘No, darling,’ he said. ‘It’s only an echo.’

But she called again and again, ‘Daddy, oh Daddy’ and every time came the answering call, ‘Mary, oh Mary.’

‘Look! What is that?’ she cried, pointing to the crest of the beach where the little coral snakes were appearing in hundreds.

The young man saw them. ‘Come quickly, Mary,’ he said in alarm, dragging her back to the boat.

As they pushed off, the girl stood up waving her hand and crying ‘Good-bye, good-bye, Daddy!’ and the whole island seemed to reply, ‘Good-bye, good-bye, Mary.’

So they left the island for ever and pulled quickly back to the yacht, and at the water’s edge, although they could not see him, stood the smiling figure of a man with arms outstretched towards the receding boat. And round his feet, hundreds, nay, thousands of little coral snakes somersaulted and danced on their tails for sheer joy.



## A COUNTRY OF LITTLE HURRY.

BY HENRY HARDINGE.

‘HAS Monsieur any commissions?’ my old Provençal gardener asked at the end of his day. He fixes the time himself according to the season and the moon and the needs of the earth, with a fine and utter contempt for any forty-hour or other man-made week, and he is paid by like unwritten natural laws. And we are both wholly content.

As he spoke, he shifted on his shoulder the strap of his little wicker basket which is a fixed part of his get-up, ranking about with his coat; not as high as his hat, which is never put off except in brief salutation or reverence—in church, for instance, or when the head of a funeral *cortège* passes. He always wears it in the house, even at meal-times. That is, I am not sure that he sleeps in the hat, but if not, it is the last thing discarded.

‘No commissions, thank you,’ I replied—‘or rather, yes, one, on the part of our neighbour Monsieur Foster. He asks if you will kindly give yourself the trouble, if it does not derange you too much, to be so good as to leave word with the carter to bring up a load of sand, of the finest and at the soonest.’

We always do it like that here, with everybody. We take time to do it. In fact, not being native-born, I was a little brusque. Were I of St. Gaston, I should have come to my point by a much more circuitous conversational route; so leisurely and indirect, indeed, that (not being native-born) I might easily have forgotten what my point was and old Dallibert would never have known that

I had any. As I had blurted it, he accepted the situation courteously.

‘But willingly, Monsieur. That is all? Then *au ’voir*, Monsieur.’

Sylvie, a little disturbed by my forthrightness (as she is at times, being herself Provençale), wondering what crisis might be impending to require such haste, spoke a trifle nervously as soon as the old man was gone.

‘Monsieur Foster is planning some masonry work of urgency?’

‘No, the sand is for the baby to play in.’

‘But no, really, without joking?’

‘Really, without joking, it is for that.’

‘But that, *par exemple*! The baby is only two months old!’

‘To-day, yes. But by the time the sand is delivered? It is of that he is thinking, comprehend?’

‘Ah, poor dear!’ Sylvie laughed. ‘I remember all last summer when they were here the electrician kept promising every day to come up in the afternoon, or the next morning without fail, to fix the doorbell, and he never got there until the day they left.’

‘Quite so. And when they got back it had run down again and they have begun anew.’

‘Truly! And the mason who assured us so often during the winter that he would mend their roof immediately, Monsieur could count upon it, and has not yet come at all.’

‘There you are. And look at the surveyors, the *géomètres* as you call them, who have been for five years measuring and calculating for the widening of a bit of the St. Gaston road, and are nowhere near to being ready to set the first stake for the contractors.’

‘Monsieur finds that one does not hurry himself too much for the work here in Provence,’ Sylvie explained to Jeanne, who had come in with an enquiring smile.

‘*Pardi sûr !* I comprehend ! But Monsieur was speaking of the *géomètres*. That understands itself naturally. They are paid by the State, like the road-menders. There is no reason why they should hurry. If they finish any job, one simply gives them another—so what is the use ? But listen, Madame : Madame knows my cousin Simone’s René, her first ? Well, she took his shoes to the cobbler’s to have them re-soled. She was to have them in a few days. Then he put her off until the next week, but that was the eve of a feast, so of course nobody worked ; and then came the confirmation of his little girl, when naturally one does nothing, and after that it was something else. Well, you know, when she got them finally, René had grown so much bigger that he could no longer get them on his feet.’

‘What a shame ! So they were no good to her at all. But she didn’t pay for them, of course ?’

‘Oh, yes, Madame ! There was no loss, for you see, by that time she had had her second, and he was already so big that very soon they fitted him perfectly.’

‘She had some luck, what ?’ I suggested.

‘*Pardi !*’ Jeanne assented enthusiastically.

‘But she will lose on the last one, not ?’

Jeanne looked puzzled as she tried to extend the formula to the last term of the series. Then she brightened, dismissing the difficulty and taking refuge in nearer and more certain figures.

‘*Ma foi !*’ she laughed. ‘But there will be a lot more of them before that !’

‘Nevertheless,’ I persisted, ‘that is exaggerated, it seems

to me, to make a customer wait like that. She should have taken the work away from him.'

'But, Monsieur, what would you? There is no hurry. A little sooner, a little later—it is not worth while to make oneself bad blood for that. One will have the work some time, and it will be good. At the bottom, Pascal is trustworthy. Another might lose the things entirely in the meantime, not? And everything goes like that. It is more than two years already that Madame Richard, the dress-maker, has had the material for a robe for *maman*. We took it to her more than two years ago. But when we have complained, she has assured us that she has other things from a year before that.'

'But what the devil does she do, then, if she never does anything for anybody?'

'Oh, but she does. There's the mayor's wife, she passes first, and the doctor's wife, she passes next. Or at least, she did until the Colonel's lady—his friend, that is—came to St. Gaston. And when they are not there, there is a wedding, or a communion, or someone going on a journey, comprehend? To be finished by a given time. And afterwards one must rest from the hurry, comprehend? But the worst for us others is Mademoiselle la Commandante. They call her that because she is not yet promoted to be Madame la Colonelle, comprehend? She and Madame the doctor's wife do not frequent any more, on account of jealousy over the dressmaking. But it is Mademoiselle who gets hers done.'

'What is her secret? Couldn't one learn it?'

'*Ma foi!* As to that,' Jeanne laughed, 'you know, for me it is because they find themselves in the same category. Madame Richard and her friend are not married, either. But for that she has good reason. Her poor husband was

a functionary of some kind, and since his death she has a pension. If she married again she would lose it. So what is the use of hurrying to the *mairie*, so long as everybody understands? They can wait anyway until there is going to be a reason, comprehend?’

‘I see. We have always been told that the French are a very practical people. But it looks to me as if your mother would never get her dress.’

‘Oh, yes, Monsieur! For this year my little sister makes her first communion, and for that we shall all have all our things. For a communion, not even Richard would fail. And you see, Monsieur, if *maman’s* dress had been finished up quickly, say in a year or so after Richard had the material, *maman* would have worn it and it would have no longer done for the communion. She would have to have another, and what would she do with two dresses afterwards?’

‘I see. Haste would have made waste, what?’

‘*Pardi!*’ Jeanne affirmed, positively.

*Provence.*

*THE WOOING.*

BY ALAN JENKINS.

FAR below the little hills of drab heather, the dim blue sea lay placid as ice so that the black boats seemed bound in it. At the foot of the cliffs a white line revealed the creeping tide. Mile upon mile north and south you could watch this foam stealing into each little cove and imagine the sweet ringing cries of the oyster-catchers as they rose reluctantly before it. South lay the glittering roofs of Deerstock, with a Welsh collier waiting outside to enter the harbour that could accommodate but one ship at a time. North lay the ruined quay where the old people used to take their pig to bed with them when tides were running high. How much you could pick out ! A thousand fields, a hundred woods, cottage and rectory and the grey walls of the priory, all could be identified. You felt a small secret pride at being able to do so, even if you weren't with anyone you could impress by your lore.

His slim body warm with expectation, the boy loped on along the rough track of the ridge, the hooded falcon docile and patient on his gauntleted wrist, the setter questing eagerly ahead, watched by a staid spaniel who wagged a faint, approving tail.

The very loneliness and stillness of the hills was exciting : it was as if you were penetrating an unexplored land, and produced a vague feeling of ecstasy in your belly. There was no sound under the spring sky save the rolling clatter of red quartz-stones as you trudged, and sometimes a lark

bounding away with a *whit whit* that had a falsely helpless note about it.

And the wine-clear air!—nostrils were not enough to draw in that exhilarating draught: he opened his wide mouth, laughing silently for sheer joy, and drew a deep, lung-swelling breath.

His keen senses made restless by hope and welded into one coiled spring so that he walked jerkily with tenseness, he followed the setter through the heather. You might walk an hour and not flush a grouse, there were so few. They were active and pugnacious now in their mating: the grey dawns of the hills were loud with their assertive challenges as cock answered cock with a *Wherra wherra, cok-cock-cok!* which, being interpreted, means *Take care, I am the Cock of the hills, I will rend you with my spurs!* By law they should have been left in peace these three months—but what was the law when you had the hills to yourself and a sharp-set falcon on your wrist? In such circumstances life was too good to admit of restraint. Only those who could not look after themselves loved the law.

Methodically the flame-throated Gordon setter went ranging and quartering, drawing up to his point after the grouse he had winded, which, if they were there at all, would be creeping away through the dull green heather. Past an ancient barrow, where a warrior slept with his household bronze beside him, the plumey tail stiffened, the tip vibrated with momentary uncertainty, then went rigid, and in that position the dog waited faithfully.

Defly the boy struck the tufted Dutch hood and slipped it off the round head. The falcon bobbed faintly and submissively. Her proud eyes were revealed, dark gleaming pools, neither beaten nor nervous, but defiant and alert.

With a sweep of the boy's arm she was sent winnowing out into the immaculate sky.

Far and wide she circled, as if seizing the opportunity of freedom, but this was in order to reach her pitch, towards which she continued to soar, fading from rufous to black until she seemed like some large swift curving up there.

In the meantime, the boy, followed by the spaniel, circled a dozen yards ahead of the immobile setter. He waited for the falcon to settle at her pitch, and presently, ceasing to rise, she cruised round leisurely, resting on her rigid wings. She was ready. The boy moved forward. He heard the startling whirr of wings as a solitary grouse got up and sped across the slope like a brown stone hurled from a catapult, but he did not see it, for he was watching the falcon.

She tipped over head-first, and with talons dangling ready for the kill and wings curving back about her tail, came falling a thousand feet at awe-inspiring speed, cleaving the air with a rocket-like swish.

She fell behind the grouse and, closing on him in a sharp swoop, struck him down and beat up again immediately. The sound of the impact was like the driving of fist into palm. Brown feathers burst out and drifted to earth with an indifference symbolic of nature's. The grouse dropped like the polished stone he resembled, but without an instant's pause, bounced out of the heather and sped on bowed wings in the opposite direction, fiercely pursued by the falcon.

But in straight flight the grouse was a match for the peregrine, and the few yards he gained allowed him to plunge headlong into the nearest heatherscrag, to crouch there in terror, his back laid bald and bloody between the wings by the falcon's hind talon.

Baulked, the falcon went ringing round, waiting for the



melancholy spaniel, sent forward by the boy, to flush the cock.

Hearing the dog brushing through the heather, the hardy old cock left his refuge and began to creep and wind ahead. He knew only too well what awaited him in the sky and he would rather run the risk of being caught by the dog than face those devastating talons a second time. He was hard-fleshed and robust, the old cock, both fighting and wooing there was the same intense energy about him, whether he was hurling himself at a rival or leaping in the air and descending with tense wings in a love-display before one of his mates.

As patient as the grouse was wily, the spaniel unravelled the warm scent, and not until the questing muzzle almost touched him did the cock get up and clatter away to plunge into another refuge before the stooping falcon could fall upon him.

The falcon did not stoop. She had soared higher and her keen eyes were not on the panic-stricken grouse but on another bird which had appeared high above the moor from the sea. To the boy's mingled excitement and perturbation he saw that the new-comer was another peregrine, a tiercel, judging by its inferior size. Fearful of the falcon wandering off, he whistled her, but she was too interested in the intruder. She screamed angrily, a rapid, wire-hard chatter, and circled uncertainly about him. Higher she winnowed to gain pitch and stooped abruptly. The wild tiercel dodged and mounted in his turn, but instead of taking the opportunity to attack, sheered off out of range. Again the resentful falcon pursued him into the sky and together they strove for pitch, screaming as they sparred, the falcon to gain height for a second assault, the tiercel in order to avoid her onslaught. The falcon would not leave him alone and,

missing her stoop again through her impetuosity, suddenly struck at him from beneath and crabbed him with vicious claws. Down they fluttered thus to earth, screaming and grappling all the while.

The boy ran towards them, but no sooner had they landed than they fell apart and, rising once more, resumed their sparring. With wonderful dexterity they dodged and twisted to avoid each other's attacks, until at last the tiercel beat high out of reach and to the boy's relief the falcon left him. When he swung out the lure, a pad of leather adorned with the wings of a grouse, she came down in a magnificent stoop and stood on it, waiting passively for him to take her on his wrist again.

He dared not risk flying her again while the tiercel was still in the neighbourhood and so, slipping on the hood, he set his face towards the sea and home.

. . . . .

The wild tiercel was not to be denied.

Two days later, when the dimness had left the sea and the water matched the windswept sky, the boy took the falcon out again on the hillslopes that crouched over the cliffs as a tawny beast waits for its prey.

Majestically she descended from the clouds to strike her quarry down, and this time the stricken lay where it fell. While she stood on the slain, fastidiously plucking the rich red and black feathers preparatory to enjoying the fruits of victory, a bird small as an eyelash appeared from the cliffs.

The boy lay on his belly on the quartz-stones spying into Spayad Combe for deer when he caught in the corner of his eye the sharp movement of the falcon's head as she glanced up at the sky.

Instinctively he followed her piercing stare and saw the tiercel cruising high up, not daring to approach because of

his presence. He clambered to his feet to take the falcon on his wrist and cursed himself for not pegging her down properly while she fed. Instead, he had merely anchored the leash by a few flat stones. Before he could reach her she had screamed and winnowed out, dragging the leash with her. Impotently he stood there whistling frantically and twirling the lure far and wide to bring her down. The excited setter ranged about, questing for a grouse, knowing something was wrong that the falcon should have been sent out before he had done his part.

Encumbered by the trailing leash the falcon mounted to meet the tiercel. At first she seemed inclined to treat the stranger as brusquely as she had at their other encounter, but after having striven heavily to soar above him, she cruised about screaming in her vehement tongue. These preliminaries concluded, they did begin to spar, and the tiercel, mounting more quickly, stooped, but instead of completing the attack, swerved aside at the last moment, and when she in her turn stooped, despite the handicap of the leash, she too veered purposely away while he dodged and winnowed up to continue the play.

Far below, the boy watched this play with an anxiety that increased when he began to realise that the two birds were not by any means antagonistic : the tiercel was seeking a mate, and the falcon, though she had been in captivity for nearly a year, was responding to his suit. Her wild instincts had not faded : they lived, a latent flame.

Vainly the boy continued to whistle her as he humped through the heather to keep them in sight. She was deaf to all but the chattering of the tiercel ; nor would she deign to notice the lure which he hopefully paused to swing again. Falcon and tiercel played across the sky, still not quite certain of each other, for the mating-urge had not yet over-

come their common mistrust, and vanished beyond the slope of the combe.

He had given up hope of seeing her again when, half an hour later, the pugnacious churring of missel-thrushes drew him to a hawthorn in the depths of the combe. On a lichen-bearded branch she sat morosely, the small wind searching through the barred feathers of her breast, the Indian bells on her shanks tinkling faintly.

High above the combe the wild tiercel uttered an *akakak* of warning, crying to his new-found mate to beware of Man.

. . . . .  
For several days the boy confined the falcon to the hawk-house, a proud title for a ramshackle place made by knocking down the louse-ridden stalls of a stable. If he waited long enough he knew the wild tiercel would wander away, seeking a mate elsewhere. But there were few peregrines along the coast and this, though it did not occur to him, was the reason for the tiercel's desperation. With brand and gun the peregrines had been harried up and down the coast of the county: ignorance and selfishness had combined, as they always do, to destroy beauty.

Day after day the falcon sat idle on a weathering-block in the sunshine outside the mews and the boy spent all the time he could with her, fearful that she, his most treasured possession, for which he would have given his right hand, would suffer in his absence. Actually the opposite was true, for his continual attention irked the bird. But she had become part of his life, and in this case the cliché meant what it said. The thought of anything happening to her caused him pangs of almost physical sickness. He had had her nearly a year now: he had stolen her from an eyrie miles down the coast, when she was a mass of white down, all beak and claws. Anchored by crowbar and rope he had

gone over the cliff amongst the crouching primroses and the dead teasels and brought back the eyass in a sack. Many patient months had gone in manning her : breaking her to the hood, flying her to the lure and, when the purple of heather was fading from the little hills, flying her at a quarry hardy and strong-winged.

But even in captivity the lonely tiercel found her, so urgent was his desire for a mate. The mating-urge, or love as we sublimely call it, is a goad that drives the creatures of the wild relentlessly. The fox goes padding miles through the midwinter night in search of the vixen whose weird scream calls him ; the dog will not rest nor cease from fighting until he finds his bitch.

Coming out to feed the falcon one afternoon, the boy noticed the hens huddling under the quinces by the farm-yard pond, and glancing up, saw the unmistakable wings of the tiercel curving high overhead, for there is a neatness and dash about the peregrine possessed by no other bird. Up went the falcon's head. Her keen eyes stared at the cruising tiercel. She screamed and impetuously flew to meet him, but flapping violently was brought back at the end of the leash that held her by the shanks.

Hurriedly the boy bore her into the mews out of the disturbing presence of the tiercel. She manifested her feelings by bating : struggling and lashing as she griped his gloved wrist, and puffing out every feather of her trim body.

Thenceforth her whole condition and temper began to deteriorate. The bloom of health faded from her plumage ; beak and claws lost their polish. Had it not been too early in the year, the boy would have thought she was ailing for the moult.

The real reason was all too plain : she was fretting for the wild tiercel who continued to haunt the neighbourhood of

the farm, and by some subtle instinct which man, growing insensitive through the ages, has lost, she always knew when he was near. There is a bond of sympathy between animals that extends beyond the bounds of mere physical contact.

The thought of this affected the boy deeply as he held the falcon on his fist one day. Another, wider aspect of nature had been revealed to him by the tiercel's devotion. He had not realised before what powerful emotions wild creatures could experience ; they began to seem more than the dumb, insensate beings he had hitherto looked upon them as. The possibility of his own loss paled into insignificance beside the beauty of this strange, silent courtship.

He unhooded the falcon. The proud, defiant eyes glared out. It seemed almost a crime to cover them, it was like extinguishing a beautiful light, and with a sudden flush of blood he bethought himself that it was he alone who was to blame. He replaced the hood, his course decided. He felt better for having made up his mind.

That same day he started to soak the falcon's meat in water instead of feeding it to her with all its rich juices. This he had always done normally on the evening before he took her out hawking, in order to get her sharp-set and therefore keener on the chase. Now he did it with a different object. Three days he continued to feed her thus on washed meat until she was growing angry with insidious hunger and would mantle jealously over her food. She longed for a good bloody crop.

On the third day he hooded and leashed her and bore her out on to the hills. He had walked an hour and was making down the seaward slopes before the tiercel appeared from the cliffs. Quickly he undid the leash and jesses. He hesitated momentarily when it came to the unhooding, but setting his lips, slipped the tufted hood from the falcon's head.

For a last time he gazed at the noble eyes, and then, as if afraid that by gazing too long he might be tempted from his decision, he abruptly cast her off. Out she launched, righted herself, and circled uncertainly above him by habit, waiting on for the setter to do his part. Then, seeing the tiercel, she soared higher to meet him, for he was reluctant to come nearer while the boy was there. For a while they circled each other as if unsure whether to approach, like people meeting after a quarrel. They came nearer and, screaming, sparred into the sky, trying to soar above one another, and gradually played across the hillslopes towards the cliffs.

A long time the boy stood there, striving to follow their flight, until at last they vanished. When that was so he turned away and, strangely happy, loped homeward down the clattering quartz-stones, leash and jesses dangling in his hand, the little Indian bells tinkling faintly in accompaniment to his nervous stride.

## A COTTAGE LOAF.

BY MABEL DAWSON.

*'I knew by the smoke which so gracefully curled  
Above the green trees, that a cottage was near,  
And I said: "If there's peace to be found in this world,  
A heart that is happy could hope for it here."'*

*(The Woodpecker.)*

It is possible that one had inadvertently stepped under a ladder, or gazed at the new moon through glass; and on the other hand, is it absolutely *impossible* that the Lares and Penates of the Smugglers' Cottage were wreaking vengeance on me for my seeming neglect of their domain? I say 'seeming,' for in reality the dear little place had rarely been out of my thoughts, but many pressing engagements in Surrey had kept me rooted there for over two months, during which time I had been unable to visit my cottage.

For those who have not seen the latter or read about it elsewhere, I must explain that it lies somewhere in Sussex, contains six rooms, and dates back to the seventeenth century, and it is what would generally be called a 'week-end cottage,' but as I am there just as frequently in the middle as at the end of the week, I prefer to give it the rightful title, though I am aware that in this respect many householders may differ from me, for it is not uncommon to find a house facing due north and surrounded by trees, yet rejoicing in the name of 'Sunnyside'; also a bungalow overlooking the gas-works which is 'Bella Vista'; and another of that ilk, on an arterial road, sandwiched between others of its kind, announcing itself as 'Mon Répos.'

But to return to my own cottage, where during my



enforced absence several untoward events had taken place. Firstly, Mussolini had smashed down the garden wall and devoured my cabbages ; secondly, the brown owls had taken possession of the cottage ; and lastly, the 'Proud Ladye' had acquired a disfiguring smudge on her elegant nose. Mussolini in this case is not Il Duce, but a powerful red bullock who grazed in the field behind the cottage. He was one of a herd and their acknowledged leader, and I gave him this name because of his likeness to his 'god-father' ; also he possessed a large fund of ambition and—as subsequent events proved—great driving power.

With a high brick wall between us this beast and I became good friends, and if I were gardening with my delightful ball-bearing wheelbarrow (which would walk upstairs if asked to do so), Mussolini would come up to the wall and accept any bits of greenery which I threw over for his benefit. Also he would occasionally stretch out his thick neck and nibble the top of a hollyhock which has aspired to outgrow the wall.

After we had left the cottage and gone back to Surrey, Mrs. X, the woman who 'does for me' at the former, came down to open the windows, and on entering the garden gate she heard a loud rumbling noise like to a falling avalanche followed by a mighty roar, and lo ! Mussolini and his attendant satellites (in this case *red*, not black shirts) came pouring through a large gap in the wall, and then in massed formation the whole herd galloped down the garden, heading for the cabbage plot, whereupon Mrs. X turned and fled for her life. Later the farmer's men arrived and drove the herd back to their meadow, placing hurdles against the broken wall as a barrier to future raids.

On hearing of this catastrophe I took Counsel's opinion—which sounds more important than 'I consulted my Solicitor.'

As a matter of fact 'Counsel' was lunching with us, and his opinion was volunteered and not demanded, for I hold it a breach of hospitality to invite a person to share one's salt and then proceed to pick his brains. And the upshot of this advice was that the farmer and not myself was responsible for the damage, but knowing that the former was of a dilatory nature, I decided to do the repairs at my own expense, but sent a warning note to the farmer, 'Don't do it again or it will be the worse for you,' or words to that effect.

The affair of the owls was a less alarming but more difficult matter. Having visitors in the cottage, I suggested that Mrs. X should sleep in the 'skillingroom,' which is a tiny chamber over the cellar and adjoining an outhouse where I keep coals at one end and garden tools at the other, among these a garden roller which was evolved for me by my 'odd man' from an empty oil drum which he filled with cement and added stout iron handles, painting it all a lively green. The only drawback to this roller is that it possesses an unpleasant sense of humour, for when you least expect it the handle comes forward suddenly and gives you a nasty crack on the head. Mrs. X went to bed in the skillingroom, but the following morning she informed me that she had been kept awake all night with a 'scrabbling on the walls' and believed that a man was trying to climb up the house and get into her bedroom. I was somewhat surprised to hear this, still, 'De gustibus, etc.,' but I could only suggest that she took up a pannikin of scalding porridge, and that when next the would-be marauder was heard, she should cast the pannikin on to his head—explaining that this was the way our ancestors defended their castles during the Middle Ages—but later Mrs. X announced: 'I find it isn't a man, but just howls.' '*Howls!*' I said shakily, visualising the Banshee (for one of my grandmothers was a 'Descendant').

'Yes,' said Mrs. X, 'small brown howls,' and went on to explain how, glancing through her window, she had seen two brown owls fly past which alighted at the outhouse door and then disappeared.

I was distinctly puzzled, for this door is kept locked, but on making an examination I discovered a gap of some two inches between the door and the lintel, which would just permit of entry if the birds squatted down on their little brown bellies and then wriggled through, and on making an inspection of the roof with the aid of a ladder, I could plainly hear the birds moving about above me.

The day we were leaving the cottage, my spaniel wandered into the skillingroom, and hearing uncanny noises in the wall there she scratched a hole in the lath and plaster. I left word that my man should come and repair this, but before he could do so Mrs. X, again coming down to the cottage, found the owls in possession. Mr. Owl was contemplating the view from my bedroom window, Mrs. Owl was enjoying a noonday siesta at the foot of my bed, while downstairs the young Owls were practising the latest dance steps on our dining-table. Mrs. X then proceeded to drive these birds out of the house, but of this task she felt somewhat chary, for lately had not a grey owl flown at a policeman while out on his nightly beat in London, and severely bitten his dignified nose? However, first opening all windows and doors, Mrs. X armed herself with a duster and eventually the birds were safely evacuated.

I imagine that driving out owls is child's play to doing that ilk by bats, for I well remember a summer night in the country, and I was just getting into bed when I received an S.O.S. from my sister requesting me to come and help her drive one of these vampires out of her bedroom. So, shrouding ourselves in sheets from head to foot (for bats

can entangle themselves in one's hair), and using bath towels as weapons, we rushed about the room looking like two demented spectres. Sometimes we tripped over our sheets and fell headlong, or collided with one another, ducking our heads as the bat flew straight at us ; while the latter now disappeared behind the wardrobe or clung to the pictures, nearly fell into the toilet jug, and went in every direction except the window ; and the room appeared like a dormitory rag—pictures awry, pillows on the ground—till at last, breathless with running and hysterical laughter, we sat down on the bed to discuss other methods, then the bat glided softly to the window and out into the darkness from whence it had come. ' Oh, lovely, *lovely* night in June.' (I shan't forget that night too soon.)

Now with regard to the 'Proud Ladye' whose nose had been smudged (and I fancy the owls were responsible for this). Her history is rather a strange one, for nobody knows who she was or from whence she originally came. Being in my laundress's cottage one day, I noticed a handsome antique frame on the wall, within which, set in an oval of gilt laurel leaves, was an oil painting displaying the dim outlines of a lady's face above an old-fashioned dress. On enquiring the history of this, I was informed that, attracted by the frame, the present owner had paid half a crown for it at the local Jumble Sale ; there was then only a 'black canvas' visible, and the laundress, taking a scrubbing brush and some soap, set to work to clean this and there appeared the 'dim outlines' that I have mentioned. Some weeks later I received a note from the laundress, saying that this picture had fallen down and the frame was smashed to atoms, so as she had no place for it now she asked if I would care to purchase it 'for ten shillings,' as 'I know you are fond of old things,' she added. So I took the picture and a friend

who has made a study of this cleaned it for me, and rising like a phoenix from the ashes, appeared a young female with a beautiful complexion, auburn hair, two cold grey eyes, a perfect nose, a rosebud mouth, and clad in a very low-cut robe of moonlight blue satin and lace. Judging by the skin-tints it might be a Lely, but the dress is of a slightly later period and may be of Kneller's time, or even an early Gainsborough. That the lady was someone of importance I feel certain, as her mien is most haughty, but though I have questioned everyone in the place, none of them admit to having sent her to the Jumble Sale, and I have also scanned the Hampton Court, Windsor beauties and the National Portrait Gallery, all in vain, to discover her replica. Having found the lady a suitable frame, she now hangs in my cottage dining-room, which was once the old kitchen, so the fair dame has not yet gone up a great deal in the social scale, but there she is, and greets me with a haughty stare when I sit down to feed. While I am away from the cottage there is no one to gaze on her charms save two framed wax medallions of Wordsworth and Dorothy, and a charming little Rockingham figure of Milton in his youth with a large volume under his arm. I like to dream that when the cottage stands deserted and the moonbeams steal through the windows at the witching hour of midnight, Milton makes a bow to the lady and declaims his *L'Allegro* : 'Where perhaps some Beauty lies, The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.' My lady might appreciate these lines, for they would remind her of the lovers who once knelt at her shrine, but should Wordsworth, following suit, announce that 'Lucy was a cottage child' my lady would say with a frown : 'La, Sir ! I find you mighty tedious.'

One of the many charms of an ancient house is that it gives such play to the imagination, especially if the former is

furnished with antiques. I fancy that my spice cupboard may have come from 'the fine house of Sir John Bank' at Peckham, whom John Evelyn visited, for it was at Peckham I discovered the cupboard and it is of unusual size, most richly carved, and is of the Jacobean or Stuart period. It is strange to remember what an important part spices once played in culinary matters, and how valuable they were, for Queen Bess was most insistent on obtaining her share of a cargo of these which Drake had captured from the Spaniards, and which was valued at several thousand pounds.

Herbs are some other things much neglected to-day, though a *sine qua non* in our ancestors' dishes. I felt it was only appropriate to an ancient house to start a herb garden, so now I have 'rosemary for remembrance' and can 'wear my rue with a difference'; also there are Tansy, Marjoram, Basil, Fennel and many others of the kind. Only Sweet Cicely, whose name had so charmed me, refused to respond to my love-call, but I shall woo her again and again till at last she is mine.

I began with relating the mishaps to my cottage, and now I will describe some of the charms that the latter possesses, but if I begin to expatiate on these I may never know when to stop. In the first place the cottage is secluded but not isolated, for it is but five minutes' walk from the main road and lies down a quiet lane, and is surrounded by meadows on both sides and possesses lovely views of the southern Downs. The garden in summer is bright with flowers and the cottage is equally attractive at all seasons. It has an extremely bright yet restful atmosphere, and I believe that the smugglers who once owned it were charming people in spite of their contraband habits.

With care and love—taking my time over it—I have furnished the cottage with small pieces of antique furniture

and have decorated its walls with old coloured prints and an antique mirror or two, which add to the apparent size of the rooms. Bright cotton curtains of an old-fashioned cottage design hang near the windows, and there are comfortable armchairs in both sitting-rooms. One of the latter—once the front kitchen, with a smooth flagstone floor—is now my dining-room ; it is delightfully cool in summer and cosy and warm in winter, with its spacious hearth and thick, well-built walls.

This is a labour-saving age, but in that respect my cottage is somewhat lacking, for it has no gas or electricity, but our cooking is admirably accomplished on an oil stove. We have a pure and unending water supply. I burn coal in the fireplaces and use an Aladdin lamp at night, and for me the slight inconveniences of the old house are more than compensated for by its peace and charm. Personally, I could never become really attached to a modern house, being one of these foolishly sentimental people who like tradition and romance in their lives.

I had first viewed this cottage when it had been standing empty for two years, and at once saw the possibilities of the place which evidently (fortunately for me) others had failed to perceive. In fact, after I had owned the place for a year a friend, who had seen it while it was empty, confessed that she had thought me 'rather mad' to contemplate purchasing, 'But,' she added kindly, 'I now see that you are a fairy who came and waved her wand around this Cinderella cottage and transformed it into this perfectly charming abode.' But the merit was not really mine, but due to the fact that my Pandora box gave me a little imagination, so that I was able to glimpse the charm of the place where others (less fortunate in this quality) had failed to do so. Certainly, acquiring this little property has added great zest to my life.

I thoroughly enjoyed the work of picking up old furniture for it, and I laboured like a Trojan in the garden with most gratifying results. I believe the flowers know who love them, and for me they have given of their brightest and best. Now if I wish to leave the 'Madding crowd' and rest my eyes and mind, I fly to my cottage and its sweetness and charm refresh my body and bring peace to my soul. As I often go down there alone my friends have asked if I do not feel 'dull and lonely in the country.' I answer: 'Never.' I am not far from the sea, which I love, and in open weather the garden keeps me busy and happy. I take with me books that are suitable to the atmosphere, old-fashioned and restful authors such as Jane Austen, Trollope, etc.; poets both ancient and modern, and books that hold a country spirit such as Richard Jefferies and Virgil's works—also some modern magazines, and fortified with these I recline (weather suitable) under the boughs of an ancient apple tree whose fruit I still garner in autumn. Before me stretch the South Downs, and behind, the garden with its old well, bucket and windlass surrounded by cobble-stones, and where in summer bloom cat-mint, campanulas, blue flax, love-in-a-mist, snow-in-summer, etc., and I feel that 'My lot has fallen unto me in a fair ground.'

The summer is here at last, and the voice of the cuckoo is heard in the land, and to-morrow I go to this cottage again. So 'Rise up, my fair one, and come away,' and I turn to my golden cocker who sleeps at my feet, but the answer comes from another quarter where two mischievous eyes are regarding me. 'Nay, mistress, it is *I* that am black but comely who will come with thee, for my sister the fair and golden one careth most for the fleshpots and naught for the sport that thy cottage provides, but *I* know the stream where the water-rats swim and the gap in the hedge where the cat



would come through to rifle the nests of thy much-loved songbirds. My sister shall stay with our Master, but I will follow thee wherever thou goest,' and I answer : ' So be it, Leila, but the gods judge between me and thee if thou bitest the Baker, for though for thee he is an enemy, for me he beareth the staff of Life.'

I shall reach the cottage at noon. Mrs. X will be there with a smile and a broom (the former she throws at me). Inside the house confusion will reign for a space, for the place has been swept but not garnished, and mattresses, pillows and blankets are airing in front of a fire. There is much to be done, but at seven o'clock I shall sit down to a meal of spring chicken, my own vegetables and one of Mrs. X's excellent apple turnovers, for verily her pastry is like gossamer, and eaten with ' lashings ' of cream is indeed most delectable.

Later I shall walk in my garden and gather large nosegays of flowers to place in the rooms ; then the sun will sink down in the west leaving incarnadined clouds in its wake, while over the meadows steal soft mists from the sea, and night-scented stock, blended with meadow-sweet from the lane, waft their perfume around me. And when darkness begins to descend I shall climb to my quaint little bedroom with the rose-wreathed wallpaper, Chippendale wash-stand, Spode ewer and basin, and the antique oak chest of drawers that it contains, and I trust I shall slumber serenely. No cars will steal by in the night, casting lurid reflections on mirror and wall (which happens in Surrey). I shall wake to hear the ' Mavis sing its love song to the dawn ' or the farm boy whistling down the lane on his way to work. I shall look down on green meadows now laid up for hay, but when last I stayed in my cottage little lambs were frisking about here, and as I heard their plaintive bleats I would recall some

doggerel which my grandmother said had a vogue when she was a child, and which, of course, were in honour of Jane :

*' Sense and Sensibility ! Oh, La !  
I heard a little lamb say Ba-a  
And methought it said " Mama." '*

And why not ? For where should we be without imagination ? And if ' We are such stuff as dreams are made of '—then—Life for the most part is just what we choose to make of it.

#### ADVERSITY.

*Dim vistaed is the path that lies  
Toward the days to be,  
Storm racked and louring are the skies  
Above a surging sea :  
And far beyond my seeing eyes  
Stretches infinity.*

*Shelter—where shall thy haunts be found  
As I go on afar ?  
Thunders the wind, with raging sound,  
Across the harbour bar :  
And all of life above the ground  
Is but a flickering star.*

*Mirthless and tortured is the hall  
Where failure's knell doth toll !  
Somewhere, somehow, a voice shall call,  
Bidding me see the whole :  
With understanding peace shall fall  
Upon my questing soul.*

ANNE HUNT.

## THE UNKNOWN GOD.

BY PHILIPPA GALLOWAY.

‘ So this is Tertius’ latest fancy ! ’ Ion, striding through the silent street, paused a moment before a niche in the wall of a house. It had been converted into an altar and lately decorated, and the flowers lay wilting in the noonday sun. A wreath of flowers crowned the little plinth of Pentelicus marble that should have borne a statue, and on the ledge below it were inscribed the words ‘ To the unknown God.’

Ion stood a moment gazing absent-mindedly, and then, roused by the fierce intensity of the heat that surged from the sun-baked wall in a blinding glare, he knocked at the door adjoining the shrine, and without waiting for an answer, went in.

The court-yard on which the door opened was plunged in shadow, and in the farthest corner where the shade was deepest, a man lay stretched on a couch, apparently asleep, but as Ion approached, he opened his eyes, folded his arms under his head and said : ‘ I knew you would come ! ’ For a moment his pale-blue eyes blazed on his visitor, and then he closed them again.

‘ My dear Tertius, you are mistaken. I was on my way to visit poor old Stychus, with no intention of calling here. But when I saw this absurdity you have set in your wall—“ To the unknown God ”—I could not resist dropping in to ask the “ whys and wherefores.” ’

Once again the pale-blue eyes were opened.

‘ You came here because I wanted you to. My trivial

wants are always supplied ; though certainly, good Ion, no one would call you a triviality. I find it a curious, but an absolute fact, that if I think long enough about anything or any person, they materialise in one way or another. I have been thinking for the last hour or so that I would like to see your cheerful face shining with the noonday heat, and here you are !’

Ion leant his generous body against a pillar and smiled. ‘ As I am here, I cannot argue, and if I would, it is too hot. What is it you want, and what is this new game of yours ? The setting sun will see me on Areopagus ; so stop your nonsense and let us have a sensible talk. To begin with . . . this altar of yours.’

Tertius flung his legs off the couch and sat up. ‘ It explains itself. I have visited all the great temples of Attica, indeed of Greece itself. Where the Ægean breaks in white surf about the cliffs of Sunion, I have worshipped the God Poseidon, and asked his protection for my only sister on a day of storm when she was sailing from Eubœa, after a visit to my uncle there. And that same night, the storm, already wild, increased tenfold, and she was drowned. Her name was Nausicaa. My mother loved the tale of the Phæacian maid that old Homer tells. Like her namesake she was “ dowered with beauty by the Gods,” and she is dead.’

Ion nodded. ‘ It is hard to think of gentle Nausicaa as dead ; I can shut my eyes and hear her laughter now.’ A hush fell on the two men for a moment, and they looked away from each other, and then Ion spoke again : ‘ But still you have not answered my question.’

Tertius stretched out his hand and drew close to the couch a little tripod stand on which stood a jewelled coffer lined with silk and divided into small compartments. In each compartment lay a gem exquisitely engraved. He

took one out of sardonyx on which was represented, in most perfect detail, the figure of a girl carrying a pitcher. Laying it on the palm of his hand, he watched the light strike colour from it, and bring into sharp relief the infinitesimal beauty of the drapery. He sat quite still for a moment, and when he spoke he did not raise his eyes but continued to stare fixedly at the gem in his hand. 'This little gem I gave to Daphne when we were betrothed. She was as fair and frail as the first Asphodel, and she was very dear to me. We were never man and wife. She died, holding this gem, shaken by some strange fever, two days before our wedding day. I wept and cried to all the Gods for her delivery, but they were deaf; or rather, say there were no Gods.'

Ion held up his hand. 'Come, Tertius, you are hard with the Gods. Perhaps it is well the lady Daphne died—she might have lived to sorrow.'

Tertius looked up. 'Yes, to sorrow perhaps, but just as much to joy.' He placed the little gem gently into its compartment and closed the lid of the coffer. 'And so two of the people I loved most were taken from me. Why should old crippled hags creep on the streets, and they who loved to feel the turf under their dancing feet lie still and cold?'

Ion sighed. His fat good-natured face was troubled, it sagged in unaccustomed lines. This was unusual talk from Tertius; but now he thought he understood the meaning of the little altar; Tertius was ever a cynic. Still all this was ancient history. Tertius was thirty or more, and these things had happened years before. Something must have occurred just lately to rouse the pain in these old wounds again. He shuffled uneasily in the silence, looking at the bowed head of the younger man, and then moving over, sat on the edge of the couch and put his hand on Tertius'

shoulder. 'But still you have your poetry. That at least is yours.'

The shoulder under his hand rose and sank in a dejected shrug. 'That is where you are mistaken. It is not mine, nor ever was ; or if it was, there was so little of it that the spring has run dry. Why, old Stychus' idiot brother could make a better rhyme than I to-day. What is it that Plato says of poets ? . . . "For the authors of those great poems which we admire do not attain to excellence through rules of any art, but they utter their beautiful melodies of verse in a state of inspiration, and as it were, possessed by a spirit not their own. . . . For the souls of the poets, as poets tell us, have this peculiar ministration in the world. They tell us that these souls, flying like bees from flower to flower, and wandering over the gardens and the meadows, and the honey-flowing fountains of the Muses, return to us laden with the sweetness of melody ; and arrayed as they are in the plumes of rapid imagination, they speak truth." It is quite obvious that what wings I had have moulted to a serious extent.' He laughed, and turning flung his arm across Ion's shoulders, and they sat thus, side by side on the couch, an incongruous couple, and then Tertius sprang up. 'But come, I have something far more interesting to talk to you about ; a most exquisite ring.' He opened the coffer, and taking out the top tray, beckoned Ion to his side. Together they stood and gazed at the great emerald lying on its bed of Tyrian silk.

'Not another like it in the world. That old Jew who lives near the Theatre of Dionysius found it for me.'

Ion's eyes glittered with admiration. He clasped his plump hands in an impassioned gesture. 'What size, what colour, and what workmanship—magnificent !'

‘ You like it, then ? ’ Tertius turned his strange eyes upon the enthusiastic Ion.

Ion's plump cheeks were wreathed in smiles, his little dark eyes glowed like hot coals. 'Like it ! I covet it more than anything I have ever seen !'

‘Unnecessary,’ said Tertius; ‘you cannot covet what is yours.’

Ion drew back. 'Tertius; are you mad to give this to me? It is fabulous!'

‘I am mad enough for that, it seems, but not enough to be a poet.’ His heavy-lidded eyes sheathed themselves as he flung himself down on the couch ; his momentary gaiety had gone again.

Ion stood gazing at the ring. His little collection of old rings to be enriched with this. It was stupendous. He turned to the long lithe figure on the couch. 'What can I say, Tertius? I should not accept it, it is too much. But it is stronger than I am. Thank you—thank you!' He seized the long thin hand and kissed it.

Tertius lay with eyes still closed, his face, with its frame of black hair, masked in a stiff immobility.—Ion took the ring in his deft fat fingers, and seating himself at the foot of the couch, became lost in almost reverential contemplation of its beauties.

An hour had passed since Ion's arrival, and the intense heat was yielding to a little gust<sup>P</sup> ~~understood~~ came from the sea, breathing a welcome fresh<sup>up</sup> ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~synic~~ heavy air.

For a long time the two men remained silent, with that comfortable, unquestioning, healing silence that is only possible between old and good friends. Tertius broke it with a heavy sigh.

‘The philosophers are all very well, but they consume themselves with words. They hide the simplest truth

beneath a mountain of words, so that seekers after truth must burrow like rabbits into these man-made mountains, and long before they can perceive so much as a glimmer of their goal, they are completely lost. Words . . . Words . . . What I want is actuality. I love you, my good friend, but beyond your affection, what have I in this world to bring me anything more than a fleeting happiness ?’

‘Would not a visit to Thalia at Corinth relieve you of these morbid fancies ?’ said Ion over his shoulder.

‘Perhaps you are right.’ Tertius laughed, and then as quickly his face set again into its mould of melancholy.

‘To tell you the truth, Ion, I have been bothered lately by the vision of a face. Where I have seen it, and why I should keep on thinking about it, I do not know.’

Ion’s great shoulders shook with gusty mirth. ‘Thalia would certainly be able to eradicate such visions in a day or two. But I would keep her in ignorance, her temper would not brook the slightest suggestion of rivalry . . . visionary or otherwise. But at any rate you can tell me what this wonderful beauty is that can vie with the charms of one of the most famous of Corinth’s hetairai !’

Tertius opened his eyes ; they were blazing with a strange light. He disregarded with a grand contempt the ribald laughter that was still rumbling in Ion’s throat, and leaping to his feet, started to pace up and down the little court-yard. After a turn or two he went and stood in front of Ion, and taking the ring from his hand, placed it in the coffer. ‘Stop your gloating, I want your attention ; you will have plenty of time to gloat at home.’

‘Well, speak on !’ Ion clasped his hands over his rotund figure and looked attentive.

Tertius leant against the pillar, his eyes fixed on Ion’s placid upturned face.



‘It is the face of a man. A wonderful face. Lightly bearded so that the laughter lines about the mouth are hidden, except where they start at the corners of the nose. About the eyes there is a network of these lines, and the eyes themselves are heavy-lidded, I would say almost tired. The nose is aquiline, and the—— Oh, how paltry is the flesh ! How can I tell you of the spirit in that face ! Knowledge and love and suffering and experience lie in every wrinkle. There is a strange light shining from within ; the eyes of that man have seen their God. It is a look I have seen on no other face, and it is to the vision of that man’s God that I have erected my shrine.’ He stopped. His look had passed beyond Ion’s round eyes to the depths of the shadow that gathered into darkness in the corner of the court-yard. It was of such intensity and passion that even the jovial Ion was silent, and the laughing words died on his lips.

‘Where or when I saw this man I do not know,’ Tertius continued, ‘but there is his face shining for ever in my mind’s eye, and I feel I cannot rest until I have found him. You will say it is fantastic. It is fantastic, and I may be mad, but like you and the emerald, it is stronger than I am.’ With these last words, he went and placed his hands on Ion’s shoulders and smiled down into his eyes. ‘Now I have unburdened my mind I feel better. Dear Ion, the afternoon is creeping on ; already the sun must be dipping over Salamis. Take your emerald, and be off to Areopagus or you will be late.’ He took the emerald from the coffer, and dropping it into a little padded bag put it into Ion’s hand.

Ion rose. ‘Yes, I should be going. Already I hear the crowd passing in the street. Paul of Tarsus, a Jew, is to speak before the judges on Areopagus. They say he has

much wisdom and a strange power. Come with me and hear him ; it will divert you.'

Tertius shook his head. 'No, I will not go, I am sick of all these wise men. I will watch the sun set from Lysabettus.'

Ion took his hand in both his own and pressed it, and his eyes filled with tears. 'You have made me very happy this day, and I thank you. It hurts me that I can do nothing to help you.'

'Why, you have given me most excellent advice. The air of Corinth will do me a world of good.' They both laughed, and still laughing, Ion crossed the court-yard and, lifting the latch, went out into the street. He moved along towards Areopagus at a steady pace, though every now and again the slow, loitering crowd hindered him. He would be a little late as it was, and no doubt miss the introductory speech. From afar he saw the people surging around Areopagus, and puffing steadily up the hill, he arrived upon the fringe of the crowd in time to see a small slender figure come forward upon the hill, in the circle of philosophers and judges, and flinging out his arms in a curiously compelling gesture, begin to speak.

Burrowing his massive body through the protesting crowd to get a little nearer, Ion lost the first few words, and then the deep musical voice of the little man on the hill penetrated his unheeding ear and brought him to a standstill, oblivious of the black looks and peremptory hissings of his neighbours.

'... as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, "To the unknown God."'

In the pause that followed there was a murmur among the crowd, like the ripple breathed over still waters by a fitful breeze.

‘He speaks of Tertius’ altar,’ muttered Ion. And then the beautiful voice rose above the murmuring crowd, stunning it to silence.

‘Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.’

Again there came a pause, but the crowd was now swayed into an expectant silence. Ion, staring up at the frail figure on the hill, hardly had time for the thought to form in his mind, ‘I will get Tertius, this must be the God he seeks,’ before once again the man’s arms were flung out in that wild embracing gesture, and the hypnotic voice went on :

‘God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands ; neither is worshipped with men’s hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things’ ; again that telling, breathless pause.

‘I must get Tertius, he must hear this man.’ Ion had turned, and was struggling his way through the crowd again. If he was quick he might just catch him before he set out for Lysabettus, and bring him back to hear the end of the speech. This was the man he sought—that wild pale face and close dark beard. No doubt Tertius, deep in some discussion with one of the old Stoic masters, had passed him when he was speaking in the market-place, or among the Jews, and had seen him all unknowing, with his spirit’s eyes.

‘At last.’ Ion dodged the loiterers on the edge of the crowd, and hurried down the hill.

‘. . . though he be not far from every one of us : for in him we live and move and have our being ; as certain also of your own poets have said . . .’ Gradually the great voice faded into the distance, and Ion doubled his pace till he bounded along at an elephantine jog-trot. The sweat

was dripping off his face as he crashed open the door of Tertius' house, and hurried into the court-yard. It was empty.

'Tertius,' he called, 'hey, Tertius,' but there was no answer.

A servant darted out, alarmed from the shadows. 'You call my Master? He has gone to Lysabettus, and thence he rides to Corinth for a few days. Is there a message for his return?'

Ion sank on to the couch. 'No, there is no message, it is too late.'

The servant bowed and withdrew.

Ion sat in a dejected heap on the couch. Well, he had done his best. It had been in his power to help, and he had tried, but it had been no use, and by now he had missed the greater part of the speech himself. Well, he would drag himself to Areopagus and hear what else this Paul of Tarsus had to say. He felt to see that the emerald was safe, and getting slowly up went out into the street. As he shut the door he suddenly remembered the little altar—the inanimate cause for all this animation in his leisurely life. He turned to it. The flowers lay dead, and there was a film of dust over it. Cleone, his little maid, had pinned a few fresh herbs inside his mantle, before he had come out. He unpinned them hastily, and strewed them in the niche, and then pulling his mantle straight upon his shoulders, turned towards Areopagus once again.

The picnic-party upon the slopes of Acro-Corinth was not a success. The slaves, carrying the litter on which Thalia lay, had stumbled several times on the way, and had jolted her severely. Dark thunder-clouds were gathering in the western sky; they filled the air with a tense oppressiveness that made her nervous and gave her a headache. To

add to everything else, Tertius was absent-minded and inattentive. Now, as the sun sank lower, it became entangled like a fiery ball in the network of clouds, and a queer lurid glow flowed like molten copper over land and sea.

‘It is a fateful day. Since you bought those rainbow stones for me this morning, everything has gone wrong ; I will return them this evening, and take instead the ring set with a jacinth.’

Thalia picked petulantly at the bracelet of opals on her slim wrist. Tertius sitting on the grass at her side, made no reply to her complaint, but continued to gaze moodily at the cloudy sky.

‘Tertius, do you hear me?’ She passed her soft hand through his thick black hair, and then in a sudden spasm of irritation clenched her fist and pulled his head back, and down on to her lap. Ordinarily he would have laughed, but to-day he wrenched his head away, leaving several black hairs still clutched in her hand. His eyes were blazing ; they frightened her. She shrank away and began to cry. Crying usually did the trick when necessary, but to-day her little helpless sobs and pretty tear-filled eyes were powerless in the face of this strange Tertius who sat staring away from her, completely unmoved. Soon her feigned distress became the real thing, and only then did he turn. She saw with relief that the white angry look had gone, and a queer new tenderness was in his eyes as he took her hands and kissed them. ‘Poor thing, I am sorry, but I am not well, and it affects my temper.’ She was all softness and consolation at once.

‘My Tertius, we will call at the Hall of Æsculapius on our return ; there they will find a remedy for any ill.’

He laughed. ‘Have they a remedy for a failure and a discontented one at that?’

Thalia stared at him in astonishment. 'You, a failure? Why, you have everything—riches, good looks, and a great gift as a poet. What more do you want?'

Tertius looked away. 'Yes, I have the first; the second is neither here nor there. I am glad I haven't cross eyes or a strawberry nose for your sake as well as mine. But the last'—he shrugged his shoulders—'the last, if I have got it, is spreading wings to fly from me, instead of carrying me with it over the flowery domains of the muses, as Plato suggests so prettily in one of his dialogues. I cannot bear its going; the fact that it can go means that it is not the real thing, and that is very bitter.'

Thalia stroked his head a moment before she spoke. 'I think the lobster that we ate is lying heavy on you. I have known lobster to cause acute depression before now.'

Tertius lay back with a loud whoop that frightened several peaceful magpies into agitated flight, and laughed till the tears were in his eyes; then he sat up. 'What a lovely thought, and how like you, my Thalia. All the wisdom of the great Aspasia is as nothing compared with the unutterable truths that tumble so glibly from your shapely mouth. It sounds so well, that the poet Tertius should suffer from a lobster-sorrow.' He leaped to his feet. 'But come, we should be off, especially if you wish to change the bracelet for a ring. And too, I hear thunder rumbling.' He clapped his hands, and the slaves came running with the litter.

Stretching and yawning like a sleepy kitten, Thalia got to her feet, and sat on the edge of the litter, dangling her legs over the side. At a word of command from the head man, the slaves moved off, and Tertius walked beside Thalia holding her hand.

The slow even pace of the slaves was soothing; he fell

into step with them, and the little procession moved steadily along the gradual descent to Corinth.

Once again his thoughts surged up, and he became oblivious to everything, except these strange problems and visions that had been troubling him for the past few weeks.

Ever since he could remember, he had been used to adulation. Men would hang upon his words ; and he had that rare gift of stimulating discussion, that is as much personality as intellect. Since the death of Daphne, marriage had never been in his thoughts ; and such as she did not mingle in the social life of the city, but stayed at home with their mothers, learning the domestic arts, and only left the parental roof for the equally strict seclusion of their husband's home. But women, hardened courtesans, who sought him out, drawn by the glamour of his wealth, would bow their heads and turn away, forgetful of everything, except that sudden, unwonted tension of their poor stale hearts at the quick blue gaze of his eyes. When women made that little involuntary, submissive movement, he knew quite well that he had only to lift his finger and they would come to him. It had been amusing to use this strange power of his, and then suddenly he had sickened of it. He remembered the temple at Sunion on that stormy day five years before, he remembered the click of the sardonyx as it fell to the ground from the stiffening hand of Daphne ; all his fine powers and prayers had been of no avail then, and suddenly he became frightened at the frailty of his humanity. Troubled and uneasy, he watched the passing crowds, and saw the sad faces, and the discontented faces, and the proud faces. Only the children seemed to be able to lift clear eyes and happiness to the arch of blue above Athens. And then suddenly, from a complete void, the wonderful pale face of the unknown man thrust itself into his mind's eye, and he forgot all else except

it. 'If I take my problems to this man,' he said, 'they will be solved.'

'Tertius !' At the sound of Thalia's voice breaking in upon his thoughts, he tightened his grasp on her small hand.

'Yes !'

'I have an idea, a most excellent idea. We will stop at the Sacred Fountain of Peirene, and you shall drink of the waters. It is said that they fill those who drink with the fires of inspiration and of love.'

Tertius smiled. 'A pretty idea. My old nurse used to tell me of the Sacred Fountain of Peirene, struck out from the rock by the swift wild hoof of Pegasus. I will drink to please you, and in memory of her, whose old heart used to thrill at those sweet legendary tales.'

Already the sounds of Corinth were floating up on the still sultry air—the cries of vendors, the shrill voices of children, and the clatter of wheels over the pavements. In ten minutes' time they were in a surging mob of people ; the idle staring crowd that gathers in every town of a summer evening, chattering in groups, moving slowly along in twos and threes, or standing in clusters in the doorways of the shops. Every now and again a litter would go by, bearing one of the great colony of Hetairai, the fame of whose beauty was a byword all over Greece, and indeed had reached as far as Rome itself. The small outer courtyard of the fountain, with its stone bench encircling it, was empty save for two men and a woman, who sat together in a corner, talking too busily to notice the entry of the litter, and its attendant commotion.

After the swift turbulence of the streets, the court-yard was a pleasant little pool of peace and silence, and Tertius breathed a sigh of relief. 'And now'—he took Thalia's hands in his—'I go to drink of the Sacred Spring ; but first



a kiss from the most beautiful woman in Corinth, so that her kiss may mingle with the waters of inspiration, and I be drunk with love and poetry !’

The slaves had lowered the litter to the ground, and kneeling beside it he pressed his lips upon the full sweetness of Thalia’s. When he rose, she lay still, her eyes close shut, a little pulse pounding at the base of her smooth throat.

It was dark inside the arches that sheltered the spring. He knelt on the steps, and holding with one hand to a ledge, carried the icy water in the cupped hollow of the other to his lips.

The pure freshness of the water was unbelievable, no wonder that magic powers were attributed to it. He dipped his hand for more. At that moment a wild stab of pain shot up the hand and arm that held the ledge. There was a rustle among the little dripping ferns. A viper. He scrambled up the steps out into the court-yard. The pain came in a blinding rush, and wrung a muffled cry from him. Thalia peered at him from the litter with frightened eyes ; and then the smaller of the two men came across to him. ‘What is the matter ? You are ill ?’ Tertius held out his hand, and the little wound upon his wrist showed plainly. ‘A snake-bite.’ The man questioned no further, but seizing Tertius’ hand in his, placed his lips upon the wound, and sucked and spat, sucked and spat till he was breathless ; and then tearing a strip of material from his mantle, bound it in an agonising tightness about Tertius’ arm.

‘I am sorry, but I must hurt you,’ he said. He took a small knife from his wallet, and made two sharp gashes through the wound, so that the blood poured out upon the ground. Tertius was breathless with pain. ‘Aquila,’ the man, still holding Tertius’ hand in his, turned to his companion—‘run to the Hall of Æsculapius, and ask for the

crystals that remedy a snake-bite. Quick !' Aquila hurried off. 'And now if the lady permits, you will sit on the litter, and await his return.'

Thalia, who throughout the proceedings had sat numb with horror, sprang up. 'Dear Tertius, does it hurt? I am so sorry that I caused you all this pain. It was all my idea. I am so sorry.' She clung to him, with little sobs.

'It is nothing, because my good friend here acted promptly. I confess I was bewildered.'

The man, leading Tertius to the litter, laughed. 'I am used to sudden alarms, and I am glad that I was of use. There now, settle yourself comfortably, but don't lie down as yet.'

Tertius leant back upon the cushions that Thalia was heaping behind his back. The man still held his hand, holding the wrist over the edge of the litter so that the blood, which still fell in a slow trickle, should not soil the silk. He knelt beside the litter, the front of his own garments soaked in Tertius' blood, stroking the purple blotchy arm with a delicate tenderness. 'Not a word, and I hurt you sorely, I fear.' For the first time he turned his head and looked straight at Tertius, and for the first time in the painful agitation of the last few moments, Tertius raised his eyes and looked at him. The formal words of thanks were never uttered. Filled with a sudden rapture of peace-fulness and mysterious content, Tertius, his eyes still fixed on the noble tired face, bending so tenderly over him, murmured: 'How strange ! I thought that you had been a bigger man.'

## BY THE WAY.

*Over Earth, like a hawk above summer woods,  
 Hangs the menace renewed of world-hate.  
 Statesmen, casting troubled glances skywards,  
 Scurry from place to place,  
 Feverishly they tie and retie papers,  
 Orotundly they speak, labouring with plans and hope ;  
 The people, massed in brick-land by the million,  
 Start on holiday, blotting out thought,  
 Or peer into bleakness, sick with apprehension.  
 The old are a-quiver with stabs of memory,  
 Murmuring one to another, ' shades of 1914 ! '  
 The young, shrugging shoulders, declaim subservience to the new  
 machine-age  
 And air belief in both dictators and passivity.*

*Father of Destiny, Moulder of minds, Arbiter of Peace and War,  
 In numberless English homes  
 Parents to-day subconsciously frame a single prayer,  
 That they may still be able to feed on You in their hearts  
 By faith with thanksgiving—  
 The only worth-while prayer is for the most difficult attainment.*

\*            \*            \*

Olivia, who had much sense, was known to be unable to appreciate yellow stockings : what, it may be wondered, would be her attitude to her own if she were living now ? If anyone were to walk abroad to-day in places where women do congregate with a penny promised him for

every pair he saw adorning the limbs of any woman under seventy which were of a different colour ('sun-tan', I am told they call it), he would return home at the day's end not a whit wealthier than when he set out. There are, it is true, some slight variations of tone, but that is all: every single woman to-day goes about in stockings of a shade designed to make it appear that her legs are stockingless—the only exceptions anywhere to be found are of those which actually are, as is provable on close—very close—inspection. It is as though every man had elected to wear no tie that was not blue; it is in truth an almost incredible, and yet actual, monotony. In former days if one with any pretensions to taste were to be told that everyone else was wearing such and such a shade, she chose something different: to-day all assimilate themselves rigorously to their neighbours. And the significance would appear to be great. The one need of the modern world is individuality, the supreme danger is mass-mentality without thought. Individuality was never so important as in days when there is least of it, danger was never greater than when a whole nation acts automatically, when no member of it does, or dares to, think for himself or herself. We see the effects of mechanized thought to-day in Japan, where many and many a citizen, in reality, hates the Chinese crime: we saw it in Italy, where many, in reality, had no welcome to give to the Führer; we have seen it in Germany on many occasions of late—and those of us who still read the Bible remember the fate that befell those that all ran together unthinkingly: they came, so it is recorded, to a steep place, with an inevitable result.

★       ★       ★

For some days my youngest rascal had been saying his

prayers to himself: it occurred to his mother one evening that it might be advisable to listen in again, so he was bidden to repeat them aloud. With an air of conscious rectitude he duly implored his Creator,

*Let my friends be all forgiven ;  
Bless the sins I love so well.*

Can anyone put hand to heart and declare that this is not exactly what one sometimes truly longs to pray? It is probable that there were understanding smiles in Heaven.

\*            \*            \*

We have reached the month that is of all others bookless—or should be, to all right-thinking people, if the phrases may here be used by which every journalist describes only those who agree with him. There are obviously only two main uses for a book in August: first, to place gently over the upturned face so as to prevent the rays of the sun unduly penetrating the closed eyelids; secondly, to remove from the trunk and stand in a neat row on a prominent shelf or table—for the first, any book will do, provided it is not heavy; for the second, it is essential that the books be ones which the owner (or borrower) has always meant to read and never has had time to; at the end of the holiday they should be dusted and replaced in the trunk. Every year newspapers take up space and mildly irritate their readers by printing several columns of comments on what they are pleased to call ‘holiday reading’—but then, as is well known, newspapers are habitually and inherently purveyors of misconception rather than formers of public opinion. People—right-thinking people, that is—do not read on holiday; they only pretend to, and not that always.

\*            \*            \*

And yet there are matters over which to ponder—murder,

for instance, just the thing on holiday, and the murderers (on paper) are still numerous. Constable publishes two tales of this kind which are interesting for their differences, one the work of an old practitioner, Henry Wade, who has put together a series of adventures experienced by a young constable ambitious to be a detective, under the infelicitous title, *Here Comes the Copper* (7s. 6d. n.); this is not Henry Wade's vintage port but a pleasant enough beverage for seaside reading; none of the series unduly excite or mystify, but all adequately entertain. The other is, so we are told, 'a new type of detective story by a new writer': it is very difficult nowadays to invent a new type of detective story and *Death Walks Softly* (7s. 6d. n.) is hardly that; but the author, Neal Shepherd, is a new writer and a promising one; it is true that by allowing his detectives to take for granted just one matter (in respect of a point on which no good detective would have taken anything for granted) and only one, he points out the real criminal unmistakably to any hardened reader of this type of story, but many even yet are not hardened and he is fresh and ingenious—and, in brief, provides excellent 'holiday reading.'

★            ★            ★

A detective story that actually is of a new type, though in this case not by a new writer, is to be found in Verrier Elwin's *A Cloud That's Dragonish* (Murray, 7s. 6d. n.). Mr. Elwin knows the primitive people of Central India as no one else does; for years he has lived with and worked for the Gonds and combated their leprosy, and he has written two previous books about them, one a daily diary of fact, the other a fictional presentation of the same set of facts. Both were good, but this, his third, is also his best: it is

fiction, it is drama, it is also fact—a stirring and even tense story of evil, superstition, crime, and love, all at work among these primitive peoples, written by one who not only knows but loves them.

★            ★            ★

From murder to St. Helena is but a step—not the ordinary step by which the hater of war regards Napoleon as a great murderer, but that by which attention lingers round the scene illogically. People will stand for hours gazing at a house where a crime was once committed, they are interested in St. Helena solely because it was once the prison of Napoleon, and yet as Mr. Philip Gosse points out in his new book, *St. Helena 1502-1938* (Cassell, 15s. n.), it ‘has a vivid history of 436 years and has been in unbroken possession of Great Britain for 255.’ He justly remarks that its Napoleonic period is ‘over-written’ and reduces those six years to their relative values : they occupy but one of his 14 chapters and it would be unfair to the others to say that that is the most interesting. Nevertheless, when all is told, St. Helena still means Napoleon, and its Governor (in spite of the list of 72 names from the first possession of the island by the English East India Company in 1657 to to-day) is Lieut.-Col. Sir Hudson Lowe.

★            ★            ★

One of the most pleasant features about CORNHILL—one of many, let us hope—is that it has never been a respecter of persons : writers of distinction have offered wares to it and received them back again if they were not of their best, writers whose laurels were but in bud have found those buds bursting under its warming encouragement. It is noteworthy how many whose early work has appeared in CORNHILL have since been recognized elsewhere ; and now there

has to be added Miss Margaret Stanley-Wrench, who won the Newdigate after her work had won its way to these columns and has now published her first volume of verse, *News Reel and other Poems* (Macmillan, 5s. n.). Here is the modern, but not what is termed the 'modernist,' that is to say, here is sensitive individuality and not insensate eccentricity. Miss Stanley-Wrench has borne in mind Ellen Terry's saying, 'Before you can be eccentric you must know where the centre of the circle is.' This is work of promise perhaps rather than of performance, but we look with confident hope to the fulfilment of the promise in the future. An interesting volume of youth.

★       ★       ★

Gossip-writers must move in good society if their lives and labours are to be of lasting interest: Princess Lieven amply fulfilled that requirement, and now Dr. H. Montgomery Hyde has supplemented the admirable editing last year by Peter Quennell of her private letters to her lover, Prince Metternich, and produced a full-length biography, *Princess Lieven* (Harrap, 12s. 6d. n.). She was an indefatigable political gossip and intriguer and had, and made, every opportunity for the exercise of her talents: no work about her could fail to be lively, and Dr. Hyde does not fail—it is a little less certain that she and her letters entirely deserve so much attention as has now been bestowed upon them, and yet she is undeniably an unusual and even an important personage in the many scenes in which she exercised tongue and pen, and many are those who figure in them with her, from Metternich to Guizot.

G.



## THE ' CORNHILL ' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 178.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iv, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach him by 31st August.

' ———, ———, and pen

Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower  
Have forfeited their ancient English dower'

1. ' The ———, most heedful,  
Receive each mild spirit,  
New worlds to inherit.'
2. ' With his cruel bow he laid full ———  
The harmless Albatross.'
3. ' A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd  
One ——— like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud '
4. ' Call'd him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,  
To take into the ——— my quiet breath ; '
5. ' Have drunk their Cup a ——— or two before,  
And one by one crept silently to rest.'

Answer to Acrostic 176, June number : ' If to these precepts you attend,  
No *second letter* need I send ' (Matthew Prior : ' A Letter '). 1. *Still*  
(Keats : ' Ode to a Grecian Urn '). 2. *E'E* (Allan Cunningham :  
' Hame, Hame, Hame '). 3. *ChariotesT* (Shelley : ' Ode to the West  
Wind '). 4. *OuT* (Swinburne : ' Hertha '). 5. *NoisE* (Tennyson :  
' In Memoriam '). 6. *DeaR* (Montrose : ' I'll never love thee more ').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss E. M. Elfatrick,  
Ruyton, The Avenue, Alderley Edge, Cheshire, and Miss Todhunter,  
Riverdene, Bourne End, Bucks, who are invited to choose books as  
mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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SEPTEMBER 1938.

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## *THE MYSTERY OF THE LITTLE DAUPHIN.*

BY THE HON. RALPH SHIRLEY.

OF all historical mysteries none perhaps is more fascinating than the problem of the son of Louis XVI, 'the little Dauphin,' as he has been called, and there are none for which the evidence is so abundant and so curious in its character.

The problem inevitably raises a variety of issues. Did the Dauphin, as has been so widely believed, perish in the Temple prison in which he was confined at the outbreak of the French Revolution or did he escape? If he escaped, was his escape connived at by members of the Revolutionary Government who were anxious to be rid of him as a possible claimant to the throne, and who at the same time did not wish to have the responsibility of the death of an innocent child put upon their shoulders? And did they, in order to achieve this object, conceal his identity and give it out that he had actually died of disease during his imprisonment? Or on the other hand, was he surreptitiously removed from the Temple by secret royalist partisans? Supposing him to have escaped, we have to ask ourselves whether he died before attaining manhood, thus practically leaving no trace behind, or whether he is to be identified with one of the numerous claimants to the title, many of whom took advantage of a certain supposed resemblance to the Prince to gather round them bands of deluded followers who accepted their credentials for what they purported to be worth. So widespread indeed was the belief in the fact of the Dauphin's escape that the temptation to pose in his

character naturally attracted many impostors. Of these the majority were unable to get themselves taken seriously for any length of time and one, the so-called Baron Richemont, was actually put on trial, as late as October, 1834, and his fraudulent pretensions exposed in court. It was contended that some of these claimants were actually put up by the government of the day to draw a red herring across the track of the true Dauphin, whose identity they counterfeited and of the establishment of whose rightful claim the Bourbon rulers were not unnaturally in constant dread.

This claimant who aroused such apprehension in the highest quarters was the so-called Karl Wilhelm Naundorff. The history of his adoption of the name is not a little curious. After escaping from the hands of the French during the Napoleonic wars, he eventually found himself in Berlin without a passport. Here he established himself as a watchmaker, and in order to regularise his position was advised to apply to the Chief of the Police, Lecoq. He accordingly put the facts of the case to him, showing all the documents in his possession. Lecoq received him favourably, but finally told him that in view of his antecedents it would be impossible for him to remain in Berlin longer, as this would be too dangerous to all concerned. He therefore gave him a pass in the name of Karl Wilhelm Naundorff, watchmaker, and on the strength of his recommendation Karl Naundorff (so-called) received a permit to reside in Spandau. (This permit, it may be observed, is still extant.) Whether such a person as Naundorff ever existed does not appear, but the subterfuge, owing to the influence of Lecoq, served its turn and as Karl Naundorff he has gone down to history.

Had the authorities been in a position to establish the fact of the death of the youthful Dauphin in the Temple their anxieties with regard to any claimant to the title would

naturally have been at an end ; but that is precisely what they were unable to do, and indeed Louis XVIII himself, by his own action or inaction, gave colour to the supposition that he had himself no faith in the death of his nephew during his captivity. The matter of the certificate of death and the burial of the alleged Dauphin had in fact been so clumsily contrived by the revolutionary officials at the time that scepticism as to the actuality of the boy's decease was practically inevitable. We have now to enquire into the facts of the case as far as they can be ascertained with any certainty.

The Dauphin—at this time there is no dispute that he was the actual son of Louis XVI and not a supposititious child—was parted from his family and handed over to a certain Simon, a shoemaker, on July 3, 1793, and remained under his care until January 19, 1794, when no successor to Simon was appointed in his place. After this followed a crisis in the history of the Revolution, when one leader followed another to the guillotine. First Hébert, then Danton, then Camille Desmoulins, and after him Robespierre. Before Robespierre's death Madame Elizabeth, the Dauphin's aunt, paid the penalty of her royal blood and the Dauphin and Marie Therèse, his sister, remained alone, confined in separate quarters in the Temple.

This is the last time we can trace a *bona-fide* Dauphin in the Temple prison. The next incident recorded is a visit by Harmand de la Meux and two other deputies to interview the Dauphin. These deputies were unable to obtain any response from the child they interviewed, who appeared to be deaf and dumb. He suffered, says Harmand, from swellings on the wrist and at the elbow. He showed symptoms of rachitis and deformation. His thighs and legs were long and thin and the arms also. The upper part of

the body was very short, the breast-bone very high, the shoulders high and narrow.

No sign of these conditions had appeared in Simon's time and the description fails to tally with what we know of the appearance of the actual Dauphin. There seems every reason to suppose that by this time another child had been substituted in place of him. Finally on June 8, 1795, the prisoner in the Temple died. On the next day the doctors came to conduct the post-mortem.

'We arrived,' says this curious document, 'all four of us at eleven in the forenoon, at the outer door of the Temple, where we were received by the Commissioners, who led us into the tower. In a room on the second floor we were shown the dead body of a boy who appears to be about ten years old *and who, we were told by the commissioners, was the son of the late Louis Capet.* Two of us recognised the child as the one to whom we had had to give attention during the previous few days. The child's death must be ascribed to scrofula of long standing.'

This complaint did not exist in either of the families of the parents of the Dauphin, nor is there any reason to believe that he was subject to it himself.

A statement has been preserved made by Sénar, the secret agent and secretary of the Committee of Public Safety, to the effect that the subject of the post-mortem was not the body of the Dauphin. The notes are stated to be now in the possession of the historian, Foulon de Vaulx, but Sénar perished after making them, March, 1798. The body of the child, whoever he may have been, was placed in a coffin and buried in the churchyard of Sainte Marguerite.

It is worthy of note that the Dauphin's sister, Marie Thérèse, was at this time still in the Temple and could of course have identified the body of her brother, but doubtless for this reason was not called in to do so.

A report was made at a later date (1807) by Pelletan, the supposed Dauphin's medical attendant, who had made the post-mortem, of the manner in which the body was laid in the coffin. He stated that the skull had been dissected for the purpose of examining the brain. The heart had also been removed and he had preserved it in spirits as a relic. After the restoration the heart was offered to Louis XVIII and the Duchesse d'Angoulême, the sister of the Dauphin, but both declined to accept it, a fact which gave rise to considerable comment.

In the year 1846, certain excavations took place in the churchyard of Sainte Marguerite and among the coffins brought to light was the one stated to contain the remains of Louis XVII. On the coffin being opened, it was found to contain a skeleton the skull of which had been dissected. Dr. Récamier made a report on the remains, in which he stated that they were those of a child of about fifteen years old. The arms and legs were out of proportion to the body.

Further evidence, of an admittedly rather vague kind, came to hand through the widow of Simon, the shoemaker, who lived to an advanced age. She had made a report to Dr. Rémuset in 1811, and this he repeated at the trial of Richemont in 1834. The doctor was employed in his medical capacity at the Hospital for Incurables at the former date, when it was reported to him that a woman of the name of Simon was making some complaint as regards the hospital regulations. 'If my children knew that I was here,' she remarked to the doctor, 'they would not leave me helpless.' 'I do not know in what way they could help you,' observed Dr. Rémuset. 'Oh,' replied the woman, 'you do not know what children I am talking about. I mean my little Bourbons whom I love with all my heart.' The doctor expressed his astonishment. 'Yes,' she said, 'I

was the guardian of the children of Louis XVI.' 'But,' said Dr. Rémuset, 'the Dauphin is dead!' 'Oh no, he is not,' she replied. She then told Dr. Rémuset that he had been smuggled away, either in a washing basket or by some other means. The doctor in charge afterwards informed him that Madame Simon was the widow of the warder of the Temple, who had been guillotined during the Revolution. It was stated that Madame Simon expressed at a later date her surprise that the Duchesse d'Angoulême, who knew the services which she had rendered to them as children, did nothing for her. She also stated on another occasion that she had seen the Dauphin at the Hospital, who recognised her, that he walked past her without speaking to her, but greeted her by laying his hand on his heart and made her a sign to keep silence. Afterwards, when he reached her bed, he said, 'I see that I was told the truth.' On another occasion when the Duchesse de Berry paid a visit to the Hospital the Duchess had spoken to her, and she had told her everything and also mentioned the code word by which she had been accustomed to receive news of the Prince. On another occasion when she was interviewed with a view to taking legal evidence in connection with the case, she further asserted that the child substituted for the Dauphin was suffering from rachitis and that she had other important information to give which she was only prepared to state before a court of justice. Her request to be allowed to do so was not granted.

It appears that a certain Mrs. (Charlotte) Atkins, *née* Walpole, was instrumental in securing the escape of the Dauphin from the Temple. This lady had known the Queen (Marie Antoinette) before her imprisonment and had a number of royalist accomplices who assisted her in the attempt. In a letter dated February 2, 1795, in replying to

a communication from William Pitt, then Prime Minister, she writes :

‘ It will be no news to Mr. Pitt when I inform him that Louis XVII is no longer in the Temple and that he has not been there for some time. The cause of young Louis XVII is in my opinion that of all the sovereigns of Europe.’

It is not possible in a brief study like the present to put forward all the evidence available in confirmation of the contention that the Dauphin was successful in escaping from the Temple, but enough has been written to show that this belief rests on very strong and substantial grounds. It is stated that one person who was privy to his escape was Josephine Beauharnais, afterwards Empress of the French. On a number of subsequent occasions Josephine intervened on behalf of the so-called Karl Naundorff, who in the course of his chequered career was constantly the victim of pitfalls laid by his enemies. Not the least of these enemies was his uncle, who subsequently became Louis XVIII and who saw in his nephew's claim an obstacle to his own accession to the throne of France.

Mixed up with the political intrigues which led to the overthrow of the Revolutionary Government was the notorious Barras—Barras who had no political scruples and was always playing for his own hand—an opportunist of the most unprincipled kind, who was ever ready to jump with the jumping cat. In the case of Napoleon Buonaparte he overreached himself by helping to power a man whose ambition and strength of purpose he woefully underestimated. Napoleon rightly mistrusted him, but at the most critical moment of his career used him for his own purposes. In close relations with Barras at this time was the Marchesa di Bruglio-Solari, the wife of the Venetian Minister, an Englishwoman by birth. Until 1792 she had



been in the service of Marie Antoinette and the Princesse Lamballe and so frequently saw the little Dauphin. In 1810 she saw the so-called Karl Naundorff in London and identified him with the child she had known. The Marchesa left interesting memoirs, and among other records of the time she made a statement to a notary which she had certified by the French Consul. It had reference to conversations with Barras and also with Queen Hortense of a very significant kind. Barras never forgave Napoleon for turning against the man who had helped him to power, and eventually espoused the cause of the Bourbons, although he had voted in the National Assembly for Louis XVI's execution.

'When I was in Brussels,' (the Marchesa records) 'in the winter of 1803 with my husband the Marchese di Bruglio-Solari, Minister of the Venetian Republic, we were invited to dinner by Barras, one of the former members of the Directoire of the French Republic. My husband and Barras fell into conversation about Buonaparte when the latter, who was somewhat heated with wine, exclaimed "I should like to see this Corsican rascal hanged for his ingratitude to me. I made him what he is and in return he condemned me to exile. But his ambitious plans will all come to nothing, for the son of Louis XVI is alive." At this time the Prefect had received orders only to allow foreigners to visit Barras. In the years 1819-1820 I spent some time in Augsburg in the company of Queen Hortense. She assured me on several occasions that the Dauphin had escaped from the Temple. Among other things she told me that when the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia visited Josephine in 1814 they said in her presence: "Whom shall we put on the throne of France?" and Josephine answered, "The son of Louis XVI, of course."'

The Marchesa further stated that learning, when she was in London, that there was a man living in Camberwell who maintained that he was the son of Louis XVI, she obtained

an interview with him and was completely convinced through facts which came to her knowledge and the proofs which she received from him personally that he, Charles Louis, Duc de Normandie—formerly known under the name of Naundorff—was the true son of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.

It is worthy of note that shortly after the conversation recorded between Josephine and the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, Josephine died suddenly and unexpectedly, and it was widely maintained among her contemporaries that her death took place under the most suspicious circumstances. A similar fate overtook the Duc de Berry, later on, following a very heated altercation with his uncle, Louis XVIII, in which he accused Louis of usurping the throne, knowing that the rightful heir to Louis XVI was still alive. Following this, the Duke was assaulted while leaving the Opera House and fatally wounded by a dagger thrust. The public at the time laid the responsibility for the attack on the Minister Decazes, the King's favourite, but it was impossible to establish his complicity. It is not, however, a little remarkable how those who championed the cause of the Pretender on a number of different occasions met with violent or mysterious deaths. Sénar, as already stated, died suddenly after entering a record stating that the boy who died in the Temple was not the son of Louis XVI. The death of the clairvoyant, Martin, who interviewed Louis XVIII, was also attributed to his activities on behalf of the alleged Dauphin. A similar fate overtook Caron, who was a domestic in the household of Louis XVI, and had numerous opportunities of seeing the Dauphin in his childhood. On being sent for by Louis XVIII and questioned, it is stated that Caron admitted to the full his knowledge of the Dauphin's escape from the Temple and frankly revealed all the facts

in his possession. Shortly after this interview on March 4, 1820, Caron left his home in the afternoon to go and call on his daughter, but never returned. His son made a search for him in vain, finally desisting on being warned by a stranger in a café that it would be best in his own interests to cease investigating the matter. The Pretender himself on various occasions was the victim of murderous assaults by secret enemies and it seemed little less than a miracle that he escaped with his life.

One of the most significant facts in connection with the evidence for the identity of Karl Naundorff with the son of Louis XVI, is the statement made by Madame de Rambaud with regard to the marks on the Prince's body. Madame de Rambaud was the Dauphin's governess when he was a little boy. She met the Pretender again on August 17, 1833, and wrote that the observations which she made of his person during his childhood could leave her in no doubt as to his identity. The Dauphin (she stated) had a number of peculiar marks on his body : a mole on his thigh in the form of a pigeon ; the curious shape of his front teeth which were rather prominent, and unusual folds on his neck ; the triangular form of his vaccination marks and the scar of a bite from a rabbit on his upper lip. All these marks were found on Naundorff by Madame de Rambaud, who had daily charge of the Dauphin from his birth until 1792. The statement of Madame de Rambaud was, moreover, confirmed by an inspection of the body of Naundorff at his death.

The Duchesse d'Angoulême, the Dauphin's sister, persistently refused during her lifetime to meet her alleged brother and investigate his claim, but it must be remembered that her husband, the son of Charles X, was heir to the throne on the death of his father (although owing to the dethronement of Charles he never actually succeeded), so

that she had a personal interest in disputing her brother's identity. She was, however, frequently approached by people of eminence who were in a position to form a correct opinion on the matter. Among these was Brémond, Louis XVI's private secretary, Madame de Rambaud, the Dauphin's governess, General de Larochejacquelin and de la Rochefoucauld, Charles X's minister, who had been commissioned by the Duchess to follow Naundorff's movements and keep her informed of his activities. This latter, while refusing definitely to commit himself, gave the Duchess to understand that the evidence he had met with had greatly impressed him and that he considered her alleged brother's request for a meeting with her, in order to prove his case, a very reasonable one.

General de Larochejacquelin narrated afterwards that when the Duchesse d'Angoulême was on her death-bed she sent for him and said, 'General, I have something of extreme importance to tell you. My brother did not die ; that has been the nightmare of my whole life. Promise me to do everything possible to find him, for France will not be happy and peaceful until he sits on the throne of his fathers. Swear to me that you will do everything that I ask you. At least I shall die easy and I think the weight on my heart will be lighter.'

It was Jules Favre, who as Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time signed the armistice of Versailles between France and Prussia in 1871, who to the end of his life acted as counsel for the Naundorff family. Jules Favre would never take a fee from Naundorff, but in order to show his gratitude to his friend, Naundorff presented him with a ring which he always subsequently wore. When the armistice of Versailles was signed Favre remarked to Bismarck that he had brought no seal with him. 'No matter,' replied the Chancellor, 'the imprint of the ring which you have on your finger will be quite sufficient.' So the armistice was

sealed with the ring of the soi-disant son of Louis XVI. It is a curious fact that eventually this ring passed into the possession of Georges Clemenceau, and the Treaty of Versailles after the Great War was sealed with the identical ring which had been employed on the occasion of France's defeat. When Baron Richemont (so called) was tried for posing as the son of Louis XVI, Favre was present to represent his client, as counsel for the Naundorff family. On this occasion a letter was read from Naundorff or, as he signed himself, Charles Louis Duc de Normandie, demanding the right to assert and prove his own claim.

A paragraph from this letter will explain the attitude adopted by Naundorff towards the various claimants whose credentials were demolished and to those who instigated them in their fraudulent misrepresentations.

‘The man’ (he says) ‘who secretly employs the charlatan Richemont knows that the real son of Louis XVI is armed with all the proofs necessary to establish his origin and can prove his identity with the Dauphin of the Temple to the last particular. He knows equally well that every time that the royal orphan attempted to obtain recognition by his family a new Louis XVII appeared who was just as much an impostor as the man you are called upon to judge to-day. This personage knows that the son of Louis XVI has escaped by a miracle from the dastardly traps which were continually laid for him by the usurper Louis XVIII, who was aware of his existence and endeavoured to get rid of him at all costs.’

Naundorff now began to prepare his case for the lawsuit which was to secure his recognition, the judge at the trial of Richemont having stated that when he chose to appear his case would be tried. On June 13 he deposited his legal summons in Court and on June 15 he was arrested in his own house without any reason given. His papers were

confiscated and he himself taken to the Prefecture of Police, so great was the fear of the authorities that conclusive evidence might be brought forward which would establish his case and lead to the overthrow of the existing Government. In the *Conseil d'état* which had to pronounce on the case, Crémieux, afterwards celebrated as Minister of Justice, described the action of the authorities as flagrantly illegal. His client, he said, had appealed to the King's Courts and a Minister of the King had had him imprisoned without warrant. He reminded his hearers that the Government were resorting to pre-Revolutionary methods, and that the Revolution of 1789 had abolished *lettres de cachet* once and for all.

It was in vain. The action of the Government had been dictated by a fear of revelations which they dared not face. Naundorff was expelled from France and took refuge in England.

Mixed up with the case of Karl Naundorff are certain strange episodes which created a considerable stir in France at the time. It is probable that they did little good to the cause of the Pretender, who indeed had no knowledge or relationship with the visionary or clairvoyant, if we should so style him, who was the cause of this sensation. This was a certain Thomas Martin, a peasant of Gallardon, who found a circle of followers such as these illiterate prophets tend to collect round them. The case in a minor way is reminiscent of the voices of Joan of Arc. Martin, like her, received messages from a supposed 'Archangel Raphael,' which he was instructed to deliver to Louis XVIII. Like her, he was successful in obtaining an interview with the King, and like her, too, he was able to create a deep impression on His Majesty and left him fully convinced of the genuineness of his mission.

It was de la Rochefoucauld through whom this audience was negotiated and to whom the King afterwards confessed how deeply he was impressed. Martin's vision and interview with his celestial visitant took place on January 15, 1816, while he was busy in his field. Martin attempted to run away and avoid carrying out his orders, but to no avail. Finally he confided in the parish priest, who sent him to the Bishop of Versailles.

Martin was obviously an unwilling instrument. He was handed over to the Minister of Police, who was impressed by his quiet behaviour and the absence of any symptom of nervous excitement. These visions were evidently a thing apart in his life and there was nothing in his general demeanour to differentiate him from the ordinary peasant. On April 2, this amazing story continues, 'the angel' appeared to him and told him that he would be taken before the King and that all he had to say to His Majesty would be communicated to him at the right moment.

Everything happened as it had been foretold. Martin was conducted to the Palace and was at once admitted to the King's Cabinet, where the Minister of Police was waiting. The King thereupon ordered the Minister to withdraw and remained alone with Martin.

Martin, we are told, repeated to the King everything that 'the angel' had instructed him to say. Moreover, he told the King of many secret occurrences which had happened to him in his exile, which the King was able to verify, and he informed him of certain conspiracies which were being made against him, describing their instigators in such a way that it was impossible not to recognise them. Also he told him that he was occupying a position to which he had no right. The King, we are told, was deeply moved and raising his hands to Heaven exclaimed to Martin, 'These

are things which no one but you and I must know.' Martin, witnessing the King's deep emotion, promised him not to say a word. He declined to accept any reward from the King.

It was seventeen years later that Martin wrote to de la Rochefoucauld that he had found the man of whose existence he had spoken to Louis XVIII. Martin had in short identified Naundorff as the Dauphin. A few weeks later he died suddenly. His friends declared that he had been poisoned.

The last scene in the life of this ill-fated claimant to the throne of France took place at Delft, in Holland. 'The patient's last thoughts,' reported his doctors, 'were mainly occupied with his unhappy father, the late King Louis XVI, and with the terrible vision of the guillotine. At other times he folded his hands and prayed that he might be permitted to follow him to Heaven.'

'Charles Louis de Bourbon,' concludes the report, 'died in our presence on August 10, 1848.' His claim to the name had been recognised by the Dutch authorities. General van Meurs, who afterwards became Dutch Minister for War, was also present at his bedside during his last hours and during much of his fatal illness. 'Everything,' declared van Meurs, 'which the Pretender said, either in hours of consciousness or in delirium, was proof to him that the so-called Naundorff was the real Dauphin, the son of Louis XVI, and the victim of the intrigues and malice of his nearest relatives.' His gravestone in the churchyard of Delft bears the inscription :

Here lies  
LOUIS XVII,  
Charles Louis, Duc de Normandie,  
King of France and Navarre  
Born at Versailles on March 27th, 1785  
Died at Delft on August 10th, 1845.



The Pretender's wife survived her husband for forty years. A shopkeeper's daughter of Havelberg, she had shared with him the ups and downs of his varied and tempest-tost career. In her later years she was known as 'the old Duchess' and enjoyed everywhere the respect of the townspeople and the authorities. Two sons and three daughters had been born to them and a number of their descendants are alive at the present day.

Doubtless conclusive evidence might yet be brought forward of the identity of the original claimant, if it were thought advisable to do so, but it is doubtful if the governments who are presumably in possession of the knowledge would consider it politic to give it publicity. There is strong reason to believe that the Papal See has full knowledge of the facts of the case and the Popes have constantly shown a markedly benevolent attitude towards the members of the Pretender's family, and have invariably addressed them in the style and titles to which they laid claim.

Numerous efforts were made to put up a monument in memory of Louis XVII. These, however, were always put a stop to by Royal intervention. Much as he desired to conceal the survival of his nephew, the idea of putting up a monument to one whom he had every reason to believe was still alive and entitled to occupy the throne of which he himself was the tenant, was more than Louis XVIII could stomach.

There is little doubt that political considerations have proved sufficiently powerful to suppress the evidence, abundant as it appears to have been, in a case where publicity might have led to complications in the government of France, the upshot of which no one could foresee and which statesmen of whatever party were not unnaturally reluctant to face.

It will have been observed that the evidence actually available in support of the escape of the Dauphin from the Temple is remarkably strong and that there is much that goes to establish his identification with Karl Naundorff ; but what is perhaps even more impressive than the evidence itself is the very obvious fear that was aroused in the highest quarters lest the facts of the case should become public property. No effort, through a long series of years, was spared to secure this end, and those who had actual knowledge of the truth and were in a position to produce evidence in support of it were one after another mysteriously made away with, while permission was refused to bring the case into court and the evidential documents in the possession of the Pretender illegally abstracted and presumably destroyed. What deduction can we draw from this action on the part of the authorities except that they believed in the genuineness of the Naundorff claim and were determined at all costs to prevent its being openly demonstrated ?

*‘FOUR ENGLISH MISSES.’*

BY KATHLEEN BUTLER.

WE cycled ostensibly to see the country-side better. We wanted to study the castles of the Loire Valley before we died, and see them we did, although, as usual, the unexpected often happened during our tour. It usually does, with us. Actually, of course, cycling costs neither the price of petrol nor the wear and tear of shoe-leather—though one of the party certainly left a pair of worn-out shoes at an hotel, on purpose, and had them carefully posted after her by the obliging staff. Bicycle tyres, of course, are comparatively cheap.

We were surprised, however, when at least two of the bicycles showed flat tyres on arrival—after an all-too-uplifting crossing—at St. Malo ; especially as there was no sign of any puncture in either of them, and the valves were not faulty. Nor did we feel that the lamentable efforts of the cross-channel steamer to tip a dock-crane through the roof of the Douane could be held responsible for the suspicious way in which we were eyed by the Customs officials in the sheds. After all, we had not pushed the ship sideways against the wharf.

French girls, in that part of the country, apparently do not cycle much ; only the working men seem to appreciate that particular form of locomotion, and the sight of a solitary householder cycling back to his cave-dwelling with a very long roll of bread under his arm became a familiar sight. Not so the four English misses pedalling their way

along the valley roads. We were a constant source of surprise to the natives. But we saw the castles. France has a conscience about the repair and restoration of her national monuments and buildings which England rather lacks. We wished afterwards that we had had the courage to visit the famous cavalry school at Saumur, but we had just started our journey then, and we had scarcely gathered together enough nerve to walk into strange places in a strange land.

Between Blois and Orleans lies a village without castle or cathedral to distinguish it. We came upon it in the late afternoon, when the hot sun was still beating down on the tree-circled market-square. It was market-day, as the bright umbrellas over the stalls proclaimed, but it was very quiet. There was a drowsiness about the motionless trees, and the languid figures moving across the white dust, and the interior of the church smelt of stale incense and must and damp and depression. It was the only cool spot in the village, but we retreated from it hastily.

We tried to change some English money at the tiny bank, but they would have none of it. They directed us to an 'hotel' where we should be '*très comfortable*,' and where 'the two sisters' would, apparently, take English money without question.

The 'two sisters' were thrilled and delighted. They told the whole village about the 'four English misses' who were cycling alone—alone, if you please!—in France. Even *M. le Curé* had to hear about it. We heard about it through the window we had flung wide, while we ate our beautifully cooked, garlic-drenched supper in the tiny parlour.

The way upstairs led through the kitchen, where we caught a glimpse of the sisters' own box bed built into one corner. Our room was not very big, but it contained four

enormous double beds, and very little else. We felt lost and a little dismayed at the prospect.

We had scarcely begun to prepare for our immersion in the billows of pillows and feather mattresses when a commotion arose beneath our window (also flung wide for the first time in ages). Soon one of the sisters came, panting, up the stairs. Would we mind, desperately, moving into the smaller room? They had only two rooms, and a French family, *en automobile*, had arrived. We moved. The second room had only two double beds, with vast cotton curtains suspended from two inverted bowls on the ceiling. By this time we were all four controlling a regrettable tendency to laugh.

We slept very comfortably. The pillows and sheets smelt faintly of river water, but they were scrupulously clean, and the scent did not disturb our slumbers. How the '*en automobile*' family slept we never discovered. There were seven of them, and they whistled beneath our window at six in the morning because the tale of our cycling had spread to them, and they wanted to know what the mad Englishwomen looked like, before they set off again on their journey. They remained in ignorance.

That day one of the bicycles sprang a real puncture, and it took us over an hour to locate and mend it. By this time the two sisters were pressing in their desire to give us lunch. As we toiled in the cobbled yard, one of them came out and promised to kill one of the fluffy white rabbits in the cage behind us if we would stay to lunch. We felt it was more of a threat than a promise, and fled on our way to Orleans.

Thence to Paris, and so home. The French station officials have a most efficient way of dealing with bicycles. They sling them on hooks, in a row, on a perambulating cross-

bar. There is something pathetically helpless about a bicycle dangling by its front wheel.

The English Customs were easy, but for one thing.

‘Let down a couple of tyres ; that one and that one will do,’ said the official. We must have looked blank, for he suddenly thawed. ‘It’s for drugs,’ he explained ; ‘there’s no knowing where people may carry them, and bicycle tyres are capable of hiding many things.’

Light dawned on us. And we are still wondering what the St. Malo Douane officials suspected us of smuggling into France in our tyres.

### SOMEWHERE.

*O, somewhere down the swift-increasing years  
That compass me like some still rising tide,  
When Youth lies long forgotten, and the fears  
Born of her innocence are set aside ;*

*There I shall find what now I cannot hold,—  
Your confidence, your dear delightful mirth,  
And all the intimate things we have not told,  
The joys that lift our spirits to heaven from earth ;*

*When I shall see the well-remembered face  
Less clearly, and the dear head bowed more white,  
When Life’s ambitions fade before Love’s grace,  
And all misgivings vanish with the night,*

*Our seeds of understanding shall have grown  
And blossomed, in a garden all our own.*

J. O. GATES.

*ANGLER'S MENTALITY.*

BY HUISH EDYE.

How many of us have been irritated by the trite defence of the man who has never set himself to catch a trout, that he has not 'the patience for fishing'? Nevertheless, though I may disown the picture of myself that is probably in the speaker's mind—the picture of a blue-lipped stoic in overcoat and muffler astride a portable seat, surrounded by baskets, jars, and bait-cans, and disconsolately watching a float from the towing-path at Hampton—I recognise that the cliché has a foundation of good sense. For an appropriate mentality surely contributes more to the full enjoyment of angling than to that of any other pastime. In shooting we go straight to the roots and stubbles and flush our partridge, or have him driven over our heads. The football match begins punctually at two-thirty. But—at any rate if we are to be successful—we have to wait on the caprice of the trout. In angling the rôle of the angler is largely passive, and therefore the mentality or temperament he needs is of the order of patience.

After forty-odd years of fishing I think I can recognise the ideal mentality for the pastime. In other words, I think I know what frame of mind the angler should cultivate in order to get the greatest possible enjoyment from his angling. I have not attained it. But neither have I yet despaired of attainment. For I think I have progressed some way towards it, and I doubt very much whether anyone was ever born with it. It must needs be developed, and to develop a temperament is a slow process.

In early days I was very far indeed from what is now my ideal. My apprenticeship was served on Dartmoor, before the days of the motor-car. I used two flies fished wet and upstream ; that is to say, I fished the nymph, though wholly unconscious of the fact. There was a long tramp over the moor, a day-long scrambling among the rocks of three or four miles of brook or river, and another long tramp home in the evening ; with the left hand (if the day had been successful) under the creel, to ease the weight on the right shoulder. At the little inn the catch was carefully arranged (the bigger fish at the top) in a large dish, and displayed on the bar. And while drinking my pint (for my father had done me a great service by entering me to beer at a tender age) I wondered anxiously whether anyone had a better lot to show. Now all this, according to my present ideas, was very wrong—the general sense of hurry, the restless search for fish over a long stretch of water ; above all, the atmosphere of competition. For competition can ruin any sport ; sport that is in the strict sense of the term, which includes only the pursuit of game. But however deplorable my attitude to it, I enjoyed this fishing immensely ; never missing a possible fishing day, or even part of a day, in any weather. I was off the moment I had finished breakfast, seldom found time to eat my sandwiches, and generally arrived back late for dinner—at which more than once I have fallen asleep from sheer exhaustion.

The little inn I speak of was called, when I first knew it, the ‘Saracen’s Head.’ Soon afterwards a new bar (and a very comfortable one) was added for residents only, and it became the ‘Two Bridges Inn.’ It had then a small sitting-room and a dining-room with a single table. Years later it was greatly extended, a large dining-room was built and filled with a number of small tables, and it was



re-named the 'Two Bridges Hotel.' Perhaps one day a site will be found for a ballroom, a few palm trees will be bought, and the last successor of the old 'Saracen's Head' will be 'The Palace Hotel, Two Bridges.' Which God forbid.

At the inn—as it still was when I was a young man—I have often listened to discussions of the origin of the name 'Two Bridges.' There was only one bridge, and we could find no traces of the former existence of a second ; not even of a 'clapper'—the primitive bridge of uncemented granite blocks to be found on most of the Dartmoor streams. A few years ago the local authority decided that the approaches to the bridge were dangerous, and built a new bridge to carry a straighter road over the river. The old bridge, some thirty yards below, remains to serve the hotel only. In the future it will be obvious to everyone why the place is called 'Two Bridges.' And everyone will be mistaken.

Before the large dining-room was added the inn was frequented almost exclusively by fishermen, occasionally accompanied by their families. A permanent resident for some years was one of a small community of sportsmen who lived on the Moor throughout the year—some of them reputed to be pensioned by their relations on condition that they did not leave what was then an inaccessible tract. Dartmoor will long remember Daubeney, who died only a year or two ago—a man of huge physique, menacing in appearance and of sardonic humour, but in reality kind-hearted and chivalrous. An instance of his humour has always stuck in my memory. An old lady (who was writing, I think, a book on the archæology of the Moor) used to stay at the inn. One morning Daubeney, who was generally up at dawn, came down late for breakfast. As he entered the room the old lady turned to him and said,

‘I wish, Mr. Daubeney, that when you are having your bath you would close the bathroom door.’ Instantly came Daubeney’s retort. ‘Dammit, madam,’ he said, ‘I am not deformed.’

I persisted in my early angling methods till I went up to Oxford, where I was initiated into the dry fly by a Wykehamist who had learnt the craft on the Itchen. He had one of the earliest motor-bicycles, and a trailer with a wicker-work body ; and he used to take me in the trailer to the Coln at Fairford. Of trailers, now happily extinct, it is charitable to say that they were fairly comfortable at low speeds, and fairly safe in the straight. But I have never been so grateful for a lift as I was to Ramsay on those Saturdays of May and June.

We used to reach Fairford in time for an early breakfast ; fish till about six ; bolt a gargantuan high tea at the ‘Bull’ ; fish again till it was too dark to see—and sometimes perhaps a little later ; and then direct from the riverside, fishy, mud-stained and wet—for we waded freely but had no waders—struggled back to College before midnight, as discipline required. Generally we brought back a few brace of trout, and my contribution to the bag increased as time went on, though I do not think it ever equalled Ramsay’s. Though perforce more leisurely than my Devonshire experience had made me, Ramsay was a restless fisherman. I took him as my model ; and neither of us wasted overmuch time on an unresponsive fish, but left him to look for another. One Saturday during the Mayfly an elderly man, who had arrived by the morning train, left the river about tea-time having killed his limit—three brace, several fish being two-pounders. He had not moved all day from a stretch of about fifty yards at the bottom of the water, where one fishes from the right bank towards a row of

willows. I remember wondering whether his method, besides being more comfortable, was not also more profitable than ours. Thirty years later I have no doubt at all that it was.

At about this period I had a week's fishing on the Yorkshire Ribble near Settle. This water, though much rougher than the Coln, is not so rough as the Dartmoor streams, and it occurred to me that it might repay an experiment with the dry fly, of which none of the local fishermen had ever heard. The experiment succeeded beyond my hopes, and I made baskets which—not in numbers but in average weight—were quite abnormal for the river. My host tried to cool my enthusiasm—I am afraid I may have been offensively elated—by saying that the success of my method was due only to its novelty. He died soon afterwards, I regret to say, and I have not had the good fortune to fish the Ribble since. But I think he was correct only to the extent that I had the first shy at the bigger fish whose station rendered them vulnerable to the dry fly but invulnerable to the wet. Now that the former is (presumably, as on similar waters) in general use, such trout must be portioned out to the angling community at large.

The success of my experiment on the Ribble encouraged me to repeat it on the Dart, with the result that even on that rapid river I have used the floating fly ever since. For many years afterwards I continued to fish wet when the water was big, and probably it pays to do so. Later I abandoned the wet fly altogether, but only because I found that catching fewer (though not smaller) fish on the dry fly gave me greater enjoyment. I should say that I make no claim to have introduced the dry fly to the moorland waters of the Dart and its tributaries. As far back as I can remember, and till his death perhaps ten years ago, a

master of moorland trout fishing named Collins used to stay at Two Bridges for a month or so every year, making heavy baskets, whatever the day, with a floating Coch-y-bondhu. I never saw him in action, nor I think did any of us, for he was a strangely secretive fisherman; which explains why his methods were not imitated. Still earlier, so I have been told, the dry fly was used occasionally on the quieter reaches of the river below Holne, but there the Dart has lost its moorland character.

The change of method developed from my experience of chalk-stream practice automatically abated the strenuous character of my fishing. But temperament is not altered easily, and I continued to be, and to some extent still am, an inquiet angler. Meanwhile it was all to the good that the mere physical exertion involved in catching trout had been reduced. Whether you alter your methods by the ordinary process of development or not, there comes a time towards middle age when, in the matter of pastimes, it is wise to take stock of your position. The occasion for this is indicated when your children begin to laugh if you say that you are going into town to get your hair cut. Is not a round of golf now more suitable exercise than four or five games of squash? And does it still do you much good—or give you a real balance of pleasure—to follow a steep and rocky burn to its head waters half-way up a mountain? I can think of more than one of my contemporaries who have refused to be warned by the ribaldry of youth, and who have suffered in consequence.

Nowadays, however, there are few, even among boys, who fish in my early manner as described above. My own sons from the first would have none of it. More than that, they have already acquired an angling mentality superior to mine. If they find a trout moving that is clearly desirable,

they feel no urge to leave him, however dour he prove. This urge I have always felt strongly. Why waste time here—I say to myself—when there is bound to be as good a fish, and an easier one, in the pool below the bridge? But year by year, I think, I resist the urge more often, and nearly always I am glad that I have done so. And if there is one thing of which I am certain, it is that the main ingredient of the ideal angling mentality is the opposite inclination—that is to say, an unwillingness to be tempted away from a fish that has satisfied you as to his credentials and that continues to feed on the surface. Such a fish, if you stick to him, falls to you in the end (in my experience) far more often than not. And you will get more enjoyment from the catching of him than you would from the finding in the pool below the bridge of another good fish who sucks down the first fly you offer him. And how often does that pool below the bridge draw blank after all?

My sons had an advantage which I missed. They were entered to chalk and limestone streams early in their fishing lives. On streams issuing from moor or mountain, which are impregnated with peat and therefore too acid to support much vegetable growth, the hatch of fly is so sparse that it is seldom profitable, wet or dry, to fish the rise only. Ordinarily one is compelled to fish the water. Now fishing the water is not the unintelligent and chancy business that the purist would have it to be. We do not fish *all* the water, but only such bits of it as experience—general or particular—has taught us to be likely to hold good trout: here the lee of a big rock on the edge of the main current, there a quiet glide under the alders on the far bank. If we have particular experience—that is to say, experience of the water we are actually fishing—such places may be very few. Some of the most likely looking spots seem to be invariably

untenanted. On the Dart I often cover in a day's fishing a stretch of nearly three miles (though not in the manner of my youth). The river here describes three parts of a circle, and brings me back within easy distance of my starting-point (and of my car). In the whole of this length there are not more than twenty places where I wet a line. Over forty years' experience has convinced me that there are no others which hold abnormal trout. One of these places is a shallow gravelly run, about a yard broad and 5 yards long ; so insignificant that probably no one else bothers about it. In this, year after year, I catch a trout of between 13 and 14 inches—a very exceptional fish for the upper Dart. He varies greatly in condition. Sometimes he is about a pound. This year he was a poor snake-like creature of barely three-quarters. But at the beginning of the season he is always there—the same trout if one did not know him to be another.

The fact that in the trout stream a desirable residence will always attract a good, and generally the same, class of tenant is well known. I am going to narrate an extreme instance, throwing myself on the mercy of the reader. Let him believe it or not. In 1905 I joined a reading party on Dartmoor. Below our farm quarters flowed the Swincombe, a tiny tributary of the West Dart. I have, very rarely, killed trout in it of three-quarters of a pound. But I have always been very pleased to kill a half-pounder. One sunny August afternoon, the water being at summer level, I went down to the Swincombe for the sake rather of exercise than of serious fishing. In a small rock pool having no feature to distinguish it from any other I hooked a very big trout. To my astonishment—I had at the time no experience of very big trout—it did not cut my cast among the rocks ; it was still attached after two terrifying

jumps ; I was able to stop it when it seemed disposed to make for the open sea ; and at last it turned over on its side. I shelved it against a sloping stone and, having no net, put my right hand over it. It slithered through my fingers—and was gone. I was not then an accurate judge of weight, but I knew that the fish if not a two-pounder was very little less.

The light went out of the world. I reeled up and walked back to the farm. And for several days I devoted myself to the uninterrupted study of the classics ; which was, I now remembered, the object of my being there.

This happened shortly after my twenty-first birthday. A few years ago my elder son, then (within a month or so) of the same age, came home on holiday in August. There was a drought, and we practically abandoned fishing. One hot Sunday at about midday he suddenly decided to take his rod up to the Moor. A few hours later I was not surprised to see him return. The reason for his return was not, however, what I supposed.

But there, you can guess the rest. He also had no net. But he managed things better than I did, though he must, I think, have shelved his fish on the same stone. It was a beautiful trout of  $1\frac{3}{4}$  lb., not at all of the cannibal type that one would expect it to be in such a water as the Swincombe. Nor was the ancestor that I handled but did not catch.

This reservation of certain stations for the élite is particularly strict in streams where normally the trout are small. And I stress it because I think it helps to explain the attractiveness of 'fishing the water,' which the purist finds so difficult to understand. Certainly it accounts (pending my attainment of the ideal angler's mentality) for my being able still to fish the Dart with enjoyment. Though nowa-

days I devote the cream of the season to chalk and limestone streams, the Dart remains (for the pursuit of trout) my home water; and the imperfect mentality I have attained in regard to it, which I think I can describe intelligibly, adjusts itself to different conditions when I fish elsewhere. On the Dart I would far rather kill a brace weighing a pound and a half than three brace weighing 3 lb. When I start fishing I set before myself the former enterprise. But as the day wears on without achievement, inevitably I begin to feel that the latter is good enough. This is the reaction that I hope some day to overcome. I have convinced myself that on the Dart, given normal conditions, it is reasonably possible to kill in a day a brace weighing a pound and a half. Over a period of years I have done it perhaps a dozen times. I believe that, if only my resolution held out till the end of the day, I could do it half as often in a season. And if I succeeded to that extent, I should enjoy the days of failure more than if I made sure always of carrying home a creelful of undistinguished trout.

What I regard as the ideal mentality should be sufficiently clear from this illustration. A further refinement is possible; but not, certainly, for me, nor I think for the great majority of us. In the Dart the best trout of my acquaintance is a very difficult fish of over a pound and a quarter. An angler whom I meet on the Kennet would sit down to this trout (though it very rarely feeds on the surface), if necessary for days, disregarding all others. And he would end by catching it. But he is an outstanding craftsman. I have not sufficient confidence in myself to emulate his mentality, and I do not recommend it for general imitation.

On the other hand, an almost equally good angler whom I meet on the Otter has his fishing spoilt for him, as it seems



to me, by a determination at all costs to 'catch the limit.' If towards nightfall he is a brace or so short of this objective, he will leave a promising pounder to search for easy 9-inch fish. A fisherman of any pretensions at all should at least be able to overcome this obsession. By doing so he will add very greatly to his enjoyment. Of that I am quite certain.

It is, of course, far easier to live up to a high ideal if you have access to really good fishing than if you have to be content with the dour and harried trout of hotel or association waters. As I have said, I know the angling mentality that I desire for myself, but have not attained it—not, that is, as a permanent attribute. But once, under exceptionally favourable conditions, I won and held it without faltering for a month. That month is still the richest of my fishing memories.

My father had, at the time of which I speak, a lease of a short stretch of the Otter. I was on leave from India, and devoted the whole of a perfect June to it. I made a sketch-map of the water, and as I found an exceptional trout, named it and plotted it on to the map. In a few days the map held enough names to give me ample choice of quarry. As a fish was accounted for, the weight and date of capture was entered against its name. The map is now a permanent record in my game book, and is before me as I write. The bigger fish seem generally to have been stationed in pairs, and many after removal were replaced—sometimes twice replaced—within the month. I see that Derry (15 oz.) was the first to go. Toms defeated me to the end. Debenham (1 lb. 1 oz.) and Freebody (1 lb. 2 oz.) died on the same day. Lloyd George I (1 $\frac{1}{4}$  lb.), Lloyd George II (1 lb.) and Lloyd George III (1 lb.) were all caught at intervals of about a week under the same

tussock. But the premier entry, though made in June, was not actually closed till the autumn. This runs 'Albert Edward ( $1\frac{3}{4}$  lb.) Sept. 12.' Albert Edward was a well-known trout that lived for several years under the right-hand arch of the village road bridge. A big alder bush made attack from the right bank impossible. He could only be covered by a back-handed cast from the water. In June I hooked him twice. On both occasions he rushed down straight into the submerged roots of the alder bush, before I could tighten on him, and freed himself there. At the third and last encounter I plunged into the roots myself before he could reach them. On seeing me there he lost his head, and the rest was easy. He is the only fish I have ever had set up. The catching of no other trout, however big, is such a satisfactory memory.

That stretch of the Otter was a wonderful piece of water. I have fished other streams that are accounted far better, but none that I have liked so well or on which I have not found it harder to preserve a virtuous mentality. On the Kennet, for instance, the second-best trout are by ordinary standards such very good fish that they corrupt almost all of us. On my first Kennet day this year, in mid-May, I had at lunch-time a leash weighing  $6\frac{1}{2}$  lb., the best being  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lb.; which should content anyone anywhere. Yet I was uneasily conscious that I should either have caught or be still attacking a trout of  $3\frac{3}{4}$  lb. (I know his weight because I got him when the May fly came up in June) which early in the day I had found rising, and which, though still unalarmed, I had abandoned after half an hour. There are some Kennet anglers who would not have fallen as I did, and I hope one day to be of their number. But that greatest of them all, who would have disregarded even Leviathan in order to watch Behemoth, a six-pounder who might

possibly take a dun or two in the course of the day—him I can never emulate. Nor do I think that a man of normal temperament would enjoy his fishing if he did so.

Difficult as is the path of virtue on a first-class chalk stream, I still think that it is most difficult of all on the rivers of moor and mountain, and that the perfect angler is he who on Dart or Tavy will not turn aside for a half-pounder. What then? If I have a free choice of my water, will I spurn the chalk and cleave to the peat? It is better to be honest. A life-long dream has been of the day when an Oil King or a Guano Magnate will clap me on the back and say, 'My boy, you have saved my life from drowning'—or from fire, but that would be more dangerous—'What can I do for you? Money no object.' Back would come my answer, held ready for the last forty years and more—'Buy me the Test.'

*THE DEAD HAND.*

BY LUCIA M. COOKE.

SHE was alone—utterly alone, and the silence round her chilled her blood, and benumbed all her faculties. It had been growing upon her for days, wearing her down, clutching at her, gripping her with icy fingers, till she felt she could bear it no longer ; and she, who had never been alone before, she, who had always had the managing imperious old woman now lying dead in the next room to rule and direct her, looked out aghast at the sudden desolation that had overtaken her. The dead woman, capable and energetic to the last, had always had her place in the world. She had held her own even in extreme old age, but her daughter had never had any place at all. Any she might have had, had gone with the silent figure lying so straitly under the sheet in the front room ; and she herself might almost as well have been a disembodied spirit for all the hold she had on life. To-morrow the dead woman would be buried, and then the last tie that bound her to the living world would be severed, and she would pass out alone into a world in which she knew not a single soul of all the countless millions that covered its surface.

They had been a singularly self-centred pair, and her isolation was complete. The cottage was a mile from the village, and they knew none of their neighbours. It had been her mother's wish, and mother and daughter had roused much covert hostility by their attitude. Coming some years ago from a distant town in the South, to which the younger woman would return on the morrow, they

had been treated as strangers to the very end ; even their speech was different from that of the country-folk around them, and their acknowledged superiority still further cut them off from familiar intercourse. For there is no barrier like superiority for dividing us from our fellows. We can, most of us, stand inferiority, but we all naturally resent a grade higher than our own. Thus the secret of their poverty had been well kept, and the sympathy that might have been theirs in bearing so common a burden was never forthcoming. The villagers went their way resentfully, and the two women went theirs. Their orbits never crossed, and in such a system it was hardly to be expected that they would. The universe is vast, but never so vast as in the distance it can set between individual lives and individual souls ; and certainly, in their case, the inhabitants of Mars were not further removed from village ken than they were.

One or two women had indeed ventured to the house the day after Martha Price's death, but they had not been invited to enter the death-chamber usually thrown open to all comers with gruesome hospitality ; and they had departed shocked that the customary observances due to the dead should be so neglected and ignored. To visit the dead, to look upon their waxen faces, their peacefully resting bodies was in their eyes the prerogative of the survivors. What was the use of having walked the same streets, and breathed the same air, and looked out upon the same scenes for a lifetime, if, when the great moment came to you and yours, no one of your contemporaries was there to witness it, and pay their last tribute of awe, wide-eyed and open-mouthed at the first touch of infinity that had come your way ? It is for this purpose that the cottager may be said to have his lying-in-state as truly as any king, though his pall be no better than an unbleached sheet, with a darn in

it, and his compeers stand round him in smock-frocks and fustian.

To-night was the last night the desolate woman would spend in her old home, and as it closed down upon her, the horror grew as it had been growing steadily and surely every night since her mother died. Her mother had ruled her with a rod of iron, telling her what to eat, what to wear, what to think, and it had been a loyal and complete submission on her part, though there had been moments when she had surreptitiously thought her lot too closely ordered ; but now she would have given anything to hear again the familiar voice ordering, directing, and laying down the law. To have law and order provided for one, that was everything, but now she was in the new and awful position of being her own law and order. She shivered and shook in the throes of a bereavement that left her thus denuded, and she sat crouching lower and lower over the dying embers in the grate, too broken and nerveless to move, shrinking from she knew not what, fearing she could never have told what unknown horror and dismay. 'I am going mad, they will find me senseless in the morning.'

She had said this every night for the last three nights, but every morning the blessed daylight had brought her a respite. But to-night she knew she would never get through it. The long fearful hours would crawl and crawl and crawl ; she could never last out, and long before morning she would be raving. As she realised the intolerable length of the long night before her, a wild panic of fear seized her. The moment, the overwhelming moment she had been expecting had come, and her mind reeled under it. Would it give way under the strain ? She would certainly go under if no relief came, and it must come quickly if it was to save her. Suddenly she realised that only supernatural aid could

reach her now, and in her very desperation she sent up an involuntary cry for help : ' Save me, O God, save me ! '

Yet she had never in her life been what is called a religious woman. The unbroken reserve she and her mother had maintained towards the physical world had also been maintained towards the spiritual world. They told their trials to none : they left even the Divinity out of their confidence. The desolate woman had been brought low indeed when she called in the aid of the Almighty. She almost regretted the sudden impulse as soon as she had given way to it, already she saw the futility of it. God was so far off, and the affairs of this world were so widely removed from His ken, but she had no one else. It was her only hope. Yet why should He care ? Death was common enough ; people died by the thousand every day, and were mourned for ; but surely no one was so utterly bereft as she was. Would her cry be heard ? Would God out of His millions send one, even one other human being to her aid ? Would He not spare one to help her press back the culminating horror that threatened every moment to overwhelm her ?

The room was as quiet as a sepulchre, but just then a slight sound attracted her attention. Her supersensitive ears seemed to detect the fall of a step lightly planted upon the boards outside. She listened breathlessly ; someone was moving with caution, someone had come to a standstill outside the door. Was God really about to answer her prayer ?—a strange hope dawned in her breast. She watched the door intently ; presently it swayed inwards without a sound, as noiselessly closed again, leaving the shadow of a man vaguely outlined upon the wall behind.

' Come in ! Come in ! whoever you be,' she cried to the shadow on the wall. ' You be welcome, oh ! dearly welcome ! ' and a sigh of boundless relief ran through her

thin frame and spread itself over her drawn and haggard features. At the totally unexpected sound, the shadow on the wall might have been seen to stoop suddenly and half-lift some heavy tool or instrument, and then as suddenly relax his hold, arrested by the sudden sweetness of the thin high-pitched voice which filled the low-ceiled room with a very *Te Deum* of thankfulness. The man, whoever he was, who had insinuated himself into the room at that hour of the night, had not expected to meet anyone there, least of all had he expected a welcome of that kind. What did it mean?—he was completely taken aback, and staggered by his unlooked-for reception. His slouching figure became more plainly visible, taking definite substance and shape as he advanced farther into the room in response to her invitation.

‘Be you an angel from God?’ she queried breathlessly, looking at her strange nocturnal visitor. She was ready to believe in any miracle out of sheer thankfulness at finding herself in company of another human being.

‘I ain’t never been took for sich before, marm,’ he said with an awkward and embarrassed laugh, his bristling hair and protruding chin darkly outlined against the wall behind him. ‘Was you expecting one?’ he went on. ‘But you be making a mistake somewheres. There ain’t no angels in my trade.’

‘What is your trade?’ she asked with infinite relief at being within speech of another living soul.

‘Well, not to deceive you, marm,’ said the man with some hesitation, ‘I be a house-breaker by profession. What they calls a burglar.’ From his shabby appearance his ‘trade’ did not seem to have benefited him much; he was evidently not a success at it.

‘But not to-night. Oh! not to-night!’ cried the



woman eagerly. 'To-night you come on lawful business, on God's own business. He's sent you to help me because I be so lonesome. If you only knew how glad I be to see you ! I ain't spoke a word to a soul for days. I'd have gone clean off my head if you hadn't come the minute you did. I couldn't have bore it a hour longer.'

The rough figure looked down at the frail woman before him. 'You do seem all wore-out, and done-for,' he said, with a touch of involuntary compassion. He was strangely touched by the childlike confidence, the naïve trust she reposed in him. It was so long since he had roused confidence in anyone. Doubtless, she was daft and quite off her head, but it moved him nevertheless. Any other woman in her senses would have instantly questioned his presence there, all tremors and shrinkings and ready to scream for help at the very first sight of him. Perhaps it was all a ruse on her part to put him off the scent. Perhaps she wasn't so daft as she looked after all. It was reported that the women who lived in the cottage were misers, there was doubtless treasure hidden away in queer places—under floors or behind rafters, if all the stories about them were true such as he had heard at the farm where he had slept only the night before.

'I ain't here on no religious stunt o' that sort,' he said, coming back to the business in hand a little roughly.

The woman did not seem to take in the meaning of his words ; she was too intent on drinking in the blessed sound of another human voice to listen much to what the voice was saying. She leant back luxuriously in her old rocking-chair to enjoy the full relief and comfort of it. The confusion and horror passed out of her mind ; her wits came back to her. She sat up in her chair, and eyed her visitor with intense interest. To anyone else, it might have seemed

at first sight that the man was hardly one whom God would have been expected to pick out for His task. Some might have thought the Divine Purpose somewhat hidden under that grim and forbidding exterior, but the Divine Purpose was quite clear to the weary woman in the chair, and in any case, she was too thankful for his presence there to find fault with his appearance. For that night, at least, the man had come as a saviour and deliverer from untold horrors, and no beauty of an angel at a distance could have equalled in value the near presence of this rough-featured man at her elbow. Doubtless in saner moments, she would have questioned his presence in the house at that hour, but fear had cast out every other feeling and made her insensible to all else. God had sent this shabby man to her rescue, and the prayer she had offered and of which he was the direct outcome seemed to clothe him with all necessary authority and power. Burglar or no burglar, what matter?—he came after all in the guise in which God Himself had chosen to send him.

‘Won’t you sit down?’ she said with eager urgency.

‘Ain’t you narvous, marm?’ asked her predatory visitor, edging on to the chair his hostess indicated. He was hardly flattered by the total absence of alarm or even of surprise in her attitude. ‘Might a’most have been expecting of me,’ he commented to himself.

‘Why yes,’ she admitted, ‘I was nervous, terribly nervous, before you came. My nerves were all to pieces. I hardly thought I should have survived to morning. But now you have come, I feel a wonderful relief, oh! a wonderful relief!’ and a note of almost passionate gratitude rang in her voice, and lit up her tired worn face.

The man was completely non-plussed by her attitude, and looked at her with a puzzled air. In her delicate

pallor and frail emaciation, her soft worn face, and gentle movements, she was far removed from anything he was accustomed to.

‘What’s wore you out so?’ he said with a kindly impulse his rough exterior would never have gained him credit for. ‘I ain’t never seed anyone so wore out since my mother was took.’

‘Your mother dead too?’ said the woman, leaning towards him with eager sympathy.

‘She died when I was a lad, and things ain’t never gone right with me since. She was a thin woman like you, marm, slim as a willow-wand, and likely to break as easy; and she had a-plenty to break her. My father drank, and my brothers treated her rough.’

‘But you never did,’ said the woman with quiet confidence.

‘It be my comfort now, but I wasn’t much help to her. A delicate woman do need a mort o’ care; but I did my best. It fair broke me when she died, and I went to the bad pretty quick without her. It is wonderful what power a weak woman has to keep a man straight! Talking to you reminds me o’ her. You and she be a pair.’ And as he looked at her, his mind switched backward to the memory of the delicate fragile woman whose son he had been.

‘You got to thank God for yer likeness to her,’ he went on solemnly. ‘Without that I might ha’ committed a crime this night. A rap on the head when I fust come in, and where ’ud you be now, marm—a-lying on this yer floor most likely, awaiting for yer own coffin.’

‘You couldn’t harm a mouse to-night, not if you wanted to,’ said the woman with unbroken conviction. ‘You be here on God’s errand, not your own.’ And she looked at him with unshaken confidence. Violence might be pos-

sible in other men, at other times, on other nights, but to-night he was a divine messenger bound to his appointed task, whatever his yesterdays and to-morrows might contain.

‘Well, yer can say what yer like, but it be lucky for you as you got that there peaky look of hern, and that little bit of a body like a bird’s,’ maintained the man with some obstinacy. He was not going to have his mother’s likeness discounted and set aside for any religious nonsense of that sort. But there again the woman resembled his mother, believing in God, bah !—women were all like that !

‘My mother be dead too,’ said the woman with a new sense of companionship.

‘When was it you lost her ? and ain’t you never got over it ?’ asked the man.

‘I haven’t had time yet,’ said the woman. ‘She’s only just dead. She is a-lying in there.’ And she pointed to the next room.

‘In there ?’ he said with a gasp at the narrow escape he had had of entering a room with a dead woman in it. It was quite a toss-up which door he had opened. It wasn’t fair to be leaving corpses about like that, and no warning to chance comers ; it was playing it very low down, even on a burglar. It annoyed him, and his original purpose, which had dropped out of sight for the moment owing to his strange reception, came back to him.

‘Ain’t you rich ? Ain’t she left you all she got ?’ he demanded in quite another tone of voice. Mothers had slid entirely into the background, and he was once more the night-thief, the stealer of property.

‘It wasn’t much,’ said the woman gently. ‘When I’d paid for the grave and the oak coffin and the brass fittings, six handles and the name-plate,’ she enumerated carefully,

‘there wasn’t much left. It’s all in that bag,’ she added, as she opened the ancient receptacle in her lap and spread out the few soiled notes and the loose silver it contained.

‘There’s about three pund in all,’ she said, ‘enough to get me to our old village in E——shire, where I’m going to-morrow after I’ve buried her. They’ve promised me a caretaker’s job at the Schools, seeing I was the old head-master’s daughter. We came away here to hide how poor we was, when he died, but now it don’t matter. She can’t be hurt in her feelings any more, and there won’t be anyone to remember me.’ She paused, then added with a catch in her voice, ‘I ain’t got long to wait now. They’ll be coming round in the morning to fasten down the coffin. It’s been left open till now.’

‘Why, maybe I could help you there,’ said the man with surprising gentleness. ‘I be pretty handy with them tools, and a friendly hand would be better nor a stranger’s. I’d do it gentle-like, and feel sorry all the time.’

‘Would you?’ said the woman. ‘It would be a real comfort to me.’ The man stooped to lift his house-breaking tools from the floor, and they passed out into the next room side by side. How different it felt to stand there in company with someone else! The awful feeling of loneliness was gone: the world was no longer a desert, but restored to normal by the presence of this chance stranger, whose simple ordinary attitude towards the sad events of life seemed somehow to take the horror out of them and make them more endurable. Under his influence, Death seemed to lose some of its sting, and the grave its terror; making even the dread act of closing down the coffin seem a natural and kindly deed.

As they stood together silently—a strangely assorted couple—he suddenly broke the silence in a hoarse whisper.

'You ain't never a-going to bury her with that there ring on her finger?' he expostulated in an agitated voice.

'It was the last bit she had kept of all our things. It's only right it should go with her now,' she answered. A sore temptation rose in the man's mind; the ring was old-fashioned enough, but the pearls were good, and there was money in it.

'I do believe I've left the very tool I'll be wanting in t'other room,' he said with ready cunning.

'I'll fetch it,' she said. The man looked after her—she was an easy dupe. Then turning his eyes to the stiffly-folded hands before him, he unaccountably hesitated.

'I ain't never robbed the dead afore,' he muttered, keeping his professional ears open all the while to the movements of the woman in the next room. 'And she was her mother. Mothers is different to other folk.' A sudden thought flashed through his mind. 'She might tell my mother that I done it!' He hesitated no longer. The coffin-lid was lifted with despatch, and swiftly adjusted; the screws went into their place like lightning; and the man worked with feverish haste to shut the temptation out of sight for ever.

'I can't find it nowhere,' said the returning woman with a little pucker of distress on her face.

'I didn't expect you would, marm,' said the man truthfully. 'So I finished it without.'

'It be real good of you,' said the woman, passing her hand along the shining surface with a mute caress.

'Do you reckon as we'll ever see 'em again?' said the shabby man with anxiety in his tone. The belief in immortality is hard to kill even in the worst of us, and all the coffins ever made and all the graves ever dug have never been able to destroy it yet.

‘Why, for certain, they’ll be waiting for us. It may be long or short, but they’ll be there,’ she answered with conviction. An hour or two ago she might not have been quite so sure of her belief. The dead were dead, and she had been alone. Since then God had answered her prayer, He had come to the rescue. This messenger He had sent, unspiritual of aspect though he might be, proved the existence of the great Power that lies at the back of the world. She had not been forsaken. God was in His Heaven, all was right with the world !

Just then the dawn looked in at the low window with a new and revivifying power. The day was dawning out of a tender luminous sky ; a thrush sat outside and sang its jubilate ; the long night was over, and the woman was saved.

When the time came for the poor little procession with its one mourner to start for the cemetery, it seemed only natural that the man should fall in and take his place by her side. He had meant to slip away in the small hours, but something held him back ; was it, perhaps, their mutual loss, their mutual loneliness ? The simple burial was soon over, and it was time to go. There was nothing more to keep them, but the woman lingered.

‘Let’s sit a bit,’ she said, when the undertaker’s men had all gone ; and they sat down on a flat slab close by.

‘I’m not troubled any more about myself, but I be troubled about you,’ she said with quiet urgency. The man moved uneasily, apologetically.

‘I ain’t worth it, marm,’ he said, his conscience pricked by her solicitude on his behalf.

‘You were never meant to live as you’re living ; you were meant to live honest,’ she continued, her transparent belief in him illumining her pale worn face.

‘It’s want o’ work makes criminals,’ said the man, ‘and I can’t get work. Hunger will drive a man to anything.’

‘That ain’t no excuse. I’ve lain hungry at night many a time, and so has she,’ said the woman, pointing to the open grave whose occupant at least would never hunger nor thirst any more.

‘But there’s worse things than hunger,’ she continued, pausing to let her words sink in. ‘And as for work, there’s plenty of farm-hands wanted in E—shire where I be going.’

‘But who’ll speak for me there?’ said the shabby man.

‘I will,’ she said with that God-given wisdom of the heart which takes the part of the sinner, and ranges itself on his side.

The man looked at her with strange new hope. What faith she had! She was very like his mother in that. His mother had always believed the best in him.

‘The first thing to do is to get rid of them tools,’ the woman went on. ‘They’ll be tempting you again before long. If they are there you’ll use them: but if they ain’t there you can’t use them.’ She had become quite practical where he was concerned.

‘What’ll I do with ’em?’ he obediently asked. His obedience was so much taken for granted that he could not but obey—this frail worn-out woman had the same power over him as his mother had had.

Martha Price’s grave was still open: it was not filled in yet. The sexton had begun to shovel in the earth, but seeing the mourners linger he had gone off on some other errand. Mourners, he knew from experience, never liked the filling-in process, it hurt their feelings, and there was no need to hurry with the dead. The man looked at the open cavity.



'I might drop 'em in there, if you was willing,' he said, and she silently nodded her head while he slipped them one by one over the edge, and they fell to the bottom with a dull thud. The shabby man looked after them.

'Maybe she'll tell my mother how I done it for her sake and yourn,' he muttered. Then he took the spade the sexton had left behind him, and set to work vigorously to fill in the narrow chasm. It took some time, while the woman rested on the flat slab close by and watched him. It seemed as if Martha Price was to be served once more in the last offices by amateur rather than professional hands. The informal burying was strangely soothing to her daughter. This shabby nondescript man she was watching seemed to throw a familiar aspect over the grave itself; and surely her mother would sleep better under the friendly action of the spade in the hands of a penitent thief, than in those of a sexton who had no need of repentance.

They turned at last to leave the cemetery, and had passed out through the gate on to the high road, when a police sergeant came rapidly down the hill on his bicycle. He stopped suddenly on seeing them, and got off. He advanced towards the man.

'I was looking for someone of your description,' he said significantly. 'You were seen to enter a dwelling-house last night, and a man at Tyler's Farm says he saw a jemmy and other house-breaking tools in your bag when you opened it in the barn. Now, my man, I'll ask you to account for your movements since this time yesterday. Where did you spend the night?'

The woman stepped forward with her sweet earnest face turned to the police officer.

'I can tell you best where he was. He was bringing comfort and help to me. He saved my reason and my

life. It's thanks to him I stand here a sane woman to-day.'

'How did he get into your house, miss?—that's the point,' said the sceptical officer, looking with a puzzled air from the delicate, refined face of the woman to the uncouth figure at her side. It was clear to him that 'rogue' was written all over the man's face, but then he was looking for the 'rogue' while the woman was looking for something quite different.

'How did he get into your house, miss?' he repeated.

'Why, you see, it was like this: he came in answer to prayer. God sent him; he was a special messenger straight from Him. Doors and windows couldn't keep him out.'

'Why no! not likely, with a complete set of house-breaking tools in his possession!' scoffed the emissary of the law. And turning briskly to the man, 'I'll ask you to turn out that bag on the grass,' he ordered curtly, 'and then maybe I'll believe you.'

A look of quiet understanding passed between the woman and the man as he emptied out the bag.

## THE MESSAGE.

*Out of the park the evening wind blew in,  
Breathing quick messages of grass and trees  
Into the fragrant drawingroom. Disturbed,  
The chandelier tinkled a glassy note.*

*The lady rose, leaving a written page  
Which was to fly thousands of airy miles  
And make a subaltern in India laugh.  
It fluttered to the ground, when she was gone,  
And lay there dead, while she unhooked the latch  
That held the garden door all day flung wide.  
Each day the shutting seemed to her an end,  
An irrecoverable loss. Each day  
She stood regretfully for a last look.  
Again she held the door and would not shut . . .  
And there across the park—she held her breath—  
The subaltern came gaily cantering.*

*The little bridge across the brook he passed  
Without a sound of hooves. The deer stood still.  
And in a sleeper's walk she moved to look  
Down from the terrace as he climbed the slope.  
Half way, he waved his hand . . . and was no more,  
Then in the cruel hush she breathed again,  
Turned home to solitude, and from the floor  
Snatched up the page she could no longer read.*

H. S. VERE HODGE.

## DRAMA OFF CAPE HORN.

BY CAPPY RICKS.

TOWARDS the close of a short winter's day in June, 1895, the old clipper ship *Florence Stella*, bound around 'Cape Stiff' with an unkindly cargo of railway iron for a Central-American Pacific port, found herself in the latitude of that dread promontory's outstretched finger-tip and some 40 miles to the eastward of it. The ship had made a good run through 'trades' and doldrums, passed down, and often sighted, Patagonia's long and variegated coastline, and well inside the Falklands. After she had passed through the Straits of Lemaire, cutting off Tierra del Fuego from the Dragon's Tail, she was beset by westerly gales and the tearing, roaring immensities of long-bearded Cape Horn seas. She had stood to the southward, well below 60 degrees south, until the pack ice was sighted, and the sun rose but a hand's breadth above the northern horizon on the few occasions when visibility, even at midday, was good enough to permit a sight of the sun.

The old clipper had not escaped damage. A smashed life-boat and burst-in-doors showed this, but sail had to be carried if the Horn were to be rounded at all. Heaving-to gets a ship just nowhere ; it lengthens the taut-drawn agony. In these days no fire could be maintained in the gutted-out galley ; the crew wore wet and sodden clothing. They suffered from outskin-chafed necks and wrists, and torn and bleeding finger-tips.

Their meals consisted of bone-hard biscuits and an occasional, very occasional, tin of stringy beef eked out by one

pannikin of courtesy-named tea or coffee made on the cabin stove. And yet the fight went on ; man's puny strength pitted against the inexorable forces of nature.

The scene was desolate. A barren, grey immensity of spindrift and flying nimbus resting almost within reach of the tearing combers showed no dividing line between sea and sky ; the ship, extended and head-reaching under double topsails and a reefed foresail and stay-sails, shrank from the onslaught of mile-long, white-crested, pyramidal seas, which rose eerily out of the void to windward to top the weather rail, and, filling the belly of the humming foresail, sweep on to fill the decks and pour over the topgallant rail to leeward. Valkyr winds of blast, salt-laden, sent the snapping, stinging spindrift as high as the mastheads, the trucks of which were performing erratic gyrations, making weird figures of eight against the dull, drab pall of the zenith.

It was not yet dark, but the brief winter day was fast closing in. Giving the order to light the sidelights and keep them handy, the captain, living mostly on the poop in these days and nights of stress, took his wife below from the chart-room for the early evening meal. He was Di Griffiths, a swarthy six-and-a-half-foot giant from Portmadoc making his first voyage in command, and he was anxious to ' make a passage.' He was a ' sail-carrier ' by instinct and training, though now he was applying brake to himself and his ship. His bride of a few months was a poor sailor, and her comfort and health called for consideration even though it might conflict with his duty. This was thoroughly appreciated by his officers and crew, who had long been wondering, ever since the gales of the North Atlantic, what manner of ' driver ' this man would be if relieved of restraint.

After a brief meal, Di wrapped his wife in his greatcoat and took her back to the poop. When he returned to his

station the weather was moderating. The barometer was low but steady ; the skirl of the gale had given place to a long, low organ note ebbing and sobbing over the still-breaking seas in a barbaric, but not malicious, rhythm ; a few more sustained squalls, he thought, and the gale would die away ready for a change in its direction, and permit the setting of more canvas with which to thresh the ship to westward.

Fortified by this thought, he joined his wife in the shelter of the weather cloth to windward, lashed to the shrouds. Finding her little hand in the darkness, he enveloped it in his own and spoke of his love, a story she had heard often before but one she never tired of. His great voice dropped wonderfully and became strangely sweet in the telling. In a few moments his arm went around her shoulders and her little head, reaching not to his armpit, nestled comfortably on his breast ; life had its tender moments even off the pitch of the Horn on a midwinter evening.

Unnoticed by them a bank of dense fog crept down on the ship ; the first mate had observed its approach but had deemed the moment inauspicious for dragging back into the stern world of reality and impending tragedy the happy pair in the weather rigging who were oblivious to everything but themselves and the sweet, profound secret that Di had been told by his wife.

And now, in a burst, came nerve-shattering reality, stark and threatening tragedy.

‘ Red light on the lee bow ’ came in an agonised hail from the fo’c’sle-head buried in the murk. Di was not the lover now, he was captain of his ‘ little kingdom and her glory ’ and he had lives to guard.

All thought of self was lost, the man of action sprang to meet grave emergency, but even as he gave the harsh order

'Up helm, call all hands,' the ships came together in a shriek of tearing, tortured steel, and a crash that brought down great stout masts weighing tons and writhing bands of tangled steel rigging.

Bows ground together, and shattered and rolled up plates from bulwarks and hull, and amid the shrieking inferno rose the cries of wounded and tortured seamen, the while each hull lifted and sank vicariously to the hurt of the other in the high-running sea.

It was a moment for ready and desperate action. Three of *Stella's* crew would never move again, but the remainder of the brave crew, bred in the hard Portmadoc schooner school on the Newfoundland trade, 'sprang to it' with courage and determination.

Both ships' jibbooms had carried away and now lay at ridiculous angles covered with an entangling raffle of wreck-age overlying both bows and forward decks.

This was attacked by arms strong with desperation and hacked at and torn away clear, the while the crew of the attacking ship, a much larger vessel, worked as feverishly and indomitably. Both crews strove desperately, at times elbow to elbow, and again separated by a gulf of grey water, and chaos gave way to some semblance of relief and order. Bows fell apart at last and glided clear, and now the stems came together in a grinding crash that levelled poop-rails on board the smaller ship and threatened the fall of the remaining masts with their dead-weight of heavy cylindrical spars and rigging.

It was then the carpenter quietly made his way to his captain's side and said in a low voice and clipped sentences that the forward collision bulkhead was shattered and bulging inward to the tremendous pressure of almost open ocean, and that the seas were pouring in through the rent.

'She must founder in a few minutes,' he added, 'unless we can get all hands down to the bulkhead at once.' Di sprang to the quarter where the ships' sterns came together, and in a deep hail called to the ship in the darkness. 'How are you? Are you badly hurt?' A confident hail from an unseen speaker announced, 'No; we're all right except for the masts and boom. We're making no water'; and Di gave a quiet order to the chief officer at his elbow to 'take below to the forehold all the seamen and start tomming off the rent and straining bulkhead.' He then ran to the chartroom door, where his wife, quiet and shaken but unafraid, was standing waiting.

'Sweetheart,' he said, 'we will meet again, and I shall always love you; but now you must go in the other ship.'

She wanted to say 'No'; her place was at his side. But he did not give her the chance. He folded her in his great arms for a moment, kissed her, and then lifted her as if she were a feather-weight. He went to the shattered rail and watched for his chance, and as the ships came together in a last glancing attack, threw her on to the half-round of the other ship's poop, dimly discernible in the dense fog.

A blinding smother of blizzard swept the foreshortened scene at the moment and everything became obliterated on the instant, but Di, with relief, carried a vision of his wife clutching the poop-rail. The squall proved a long one, in which the ships finally drew clear and became lost to each other, but Di, with mind at ease, was free to take care of his kingdom and the lives in his charge.

Stationing some members of the crew at the pumps he went into the semi-darkness of the hold to tackle the task that was to decide their fate. The swirling inrush of water seemed implacable and beyond the power of puny man, but in its stemming, faint as was the prospect of achieving this,



lay their only hope of safety. The railway iron proved its worth as battering rams and 'toms' and the straining humans, stripped to the waist, slowly but surely forced back the steel bulkhead almost into position.

Setbacks there were throughout the long night, in which the travail of hours was set to nought in an instant, but each occasion was but a further call to endeavour, and of the lessons learnt every advantage was taken by men who would not yield. They worked on and on and by the dawn the immediate safety of the ship was assured. Certainly the pumps could not even for a moment go unmanned and this meant back- and heart-breaking, hand-searing toil to the men.

The forepeak was, of course, open to the ocean and the ship was in no case to meet even the shortest sea, but still there was hope for determined men ; if port could not be reached, then it might be possible to make some point on the long Patagonian coast, to find a sandy beach on which to beach the ship and so safeguard the lives of the crew, but this was to be the last expedient. Dawn found the battered ship still afloat, with decks still a tangle of broken, twisted spars and torn rigging, running with square yards and a rag of storm canvas to the north-east and the leak almost under control. Di himself prepared and served out hot coffee and grog to his tired but unbeaten crew, and then, with pumps going round with a strong, steady beat, the ship's minor wounds were dressed and the entwining tangle of wreckage cleared away.

'We cannot make the Falklands,' said Di to his men ; 'we will steer for Montevideo, and I know that I can rely upon you.'

He could, and then followed three long weeks of drawn and taut endeavour. The wind remained fair on the quarter,

but only small storm canvas could be carried, and even this more than once proved more than the torn and strained bulkhead could bear, while all the time, without a moment's cessation, day or night, the pumps went clank, clank, clank.

There were no such things as watches below ; weary seamen with lacerated hands dropped out, as limits of endurance were reached and recognised, and slept as they fell near their posts until the ravages of outraged Nature were made good and the battle could begin again ; only the bulkhead party, incessantly re-shoring and chintzing-up, were organised in regular spells of labour and rest, and theirs was the hardest task of all, in the gloom of the hold with the ever-present threat of sudden death should the pressure of the sea without defeat for a moment their puny efforts at salvage, an eventuality that threatened with every dip of the bows to a rising sea.

. . . . .

The three weeks came to an end, and with it a period to the endeavours of worn-out captain and crew.

'Straight in,' said Di to the pilot, and straightaway subsided on the poop skylight to sleep for seven, long, blissful hours.

'Wake up, wake up,' called the pilot, shaking the captain's great shoulder, 'we are there.'

The first sight to greet Di as he rose to his feet, staggering yet with exhaustion, was that of a heavy-looking, large, full-rigged ship at anchor. She had no bowsprit and was without foretopmast and main topgallant mast, while her fo'c'sle-head was half-sheared away.

'What ship is that ? How long has she been here ?' asked Di eagerly.

'Oh, that's the *Glenesslin* ; she arrived this morning.'

'That's the ship I was in collision with off the Horn ;

my wife is on board her ; steer to pass close alongside,' said Di.

The captain and officers of the *Glenesslin* on the poop of their ship watched the *Stella* approach. 'How is my wife?' called Di as soon as his voice could carry over the water, and as he noticed with a cold hand gripping his heart that captain and officers stood alone. Perhaps his wife was below, ill ; perhaps she had been taken ashore to hospital ; surely no other contingency could explain her absence.

'How is what?' came back over the water. 'My wife,' said Di. 'Isn't she on board? Where is she?' 'We don't know anything of your wife,' followed by, 'I am sorry to say. Did you expect to find her on board here?' Di didn't reply ; there was nothing to say, but he has not married since. He has lived his life in the love of a few short months, knowing that somehow, some day, somewhere, he will, as he said, meet again in halcyon calm the bride, and partner of his soul whom, by reason of his great and abiding love, he threw to her death in the raging Cape Horn seas.

## *A LICHFIELD GROUP.*

BY MURIEL KENT.

### I.

ONE evening in 1776, Dr. Johnson and Boswell, staying at Lichfield together, were invited to supper by Mr. Seward, the canon residentiary who lived in the bishop's palace ; father of Anna—known both as 'the Lichfield Corinne' and 'the Swan of Lichfield'—and Sarah, who died on the eve of her marriage to Johnson's stepson. Boswell was impressed by his host's bearing and described him as 'a genteel, well-bred, dignified clergyman.' Mr. Seward had not only the advantage of episcopal surroundings, for he 'had travelled with Lord Charles Fitzroy . . . and he had lived much in the great world,' besides having some reputation as a scholar and writer.

'His lady,' Boswell goes on, 'was the daughter of Mr. Hunter, Johnson's first schoolmaster.<sup>1</sup> And now, for the first time, I had the pleasure of seeing his celebrated daughter, Miss Anna Seward.'

The Doctor, however, had long known Mr. Seward and held another opinion of him.

'Sir, his ambition is to be a fine talker ; so he goes to Buxton and such places, where he may find companies to listen to him. And, Sir, he is a valetu-dinarian, one of those who are always mending themselves. . . .'

This was a kind of preoccupation which Johnson specially disliked, for he declared that it reduced a man to the level of

<sup>1</sup> Remembered by Dr. Johnson as 'very severe, and wrong-headedly severe' teacher.

a pig in a sty. As to the Swan, she neither amused nor soothed the Doctor, and they must always have been incompatible ; though Boswell (who evidently wished to see them on good terms) was once gratified to hear him approve of the poetess's lines on Lichfield, and records that on another occasion he actually praised, to her face, ' the description of the sea round the North Pole, in her Ode on the Death of Captain Cook.' It is one of the ironies of fame that Anna Seward should be chiefly remembered now through her adoration for Sir Walter Scott, which—inconvenient though its demands became—gained for her a place in his wide circle of friends, and through her strong antipathy to Dr. Johnson. He must have been a formidable opponent in his lifetime, and that he was aware of her antagonism is proved by a note written by Mrs. Piozzi referring to her visit to Lichfield, on the way to Wales in 1774 : ' Dr. Johnson would not suffer me to speak to Miss Seward.'

Perhaps when the Doctor was Mr. Seward's guest at the palace, there was a tacit truce between the two celebrities. Unfortunately, Boswell did not recount the table talk of that evening ; and it is tempting to disregard facts and to imagine the other figures in our group, Thomas Day and Richard Lovell Edgeworth, as present too. Then, like some modern biographers, we might go a step further and compose Johnsonian judgments on that remarkable pair—as he would have passed them afterwards to Boswell.

But Boswell's description of Mr. Dilly's party in London, two years later, is better than anything our flights of fancy could achieve ; for he not only gives a full report of the conversation, but shows us Dr. Johnson in one of his most rampant moods. Perhaps Miss Seward's presence may have had something to do with the fact that he kept Boswell on tenterhooks. Before dinner, Johnson seized on a new book,

Mr. Charles Sheridan's *Account of the late Revolution in Sweden*, and 'seemed to read it ravenously,' even wrapping it in the cloth while he sat at table. This, however, only caused Mrs. Knowles, 'the ingenious Quaker lady,' to remark on his mental activity and say admiringly: 'he tears out the heart of a book.'

Presently the talk turned to America, and on this subject Boswell admits that Dr. Johnson became a 'violent aggressor.' He declared, 'I am willing to love all mankind, *except an American*,' and went on to denounce the whole race, exclaiming that he would 'burn and destroy them.'

'Miss Seward, looking to him with mild but steady astonishment, said "Sir, this is an instance that we are always most violent against those whom we have injured."'

Whereupon, Johnson 'roared out another tremendous volley, which one might fancy could be heard across the Atlantic,' while poor Boswell listened in 'great uneasiness, lamenting his heat of temper, till, by degrees, I diverted his attention to other topics.'

Later in the evening, Johnson waxed over-vehement again in speaking of a young lady he knew well, who had lately become a Quaker. He swept aside all arguments in her defence brought forward by his fellow-guests, and asserted that she had acted in obstinate ignorance. Only 'an odious wench' would have changed her religion and left the Church of England in this way. And once more the ladies were shocked at his intolerance—perhaps at his epithets also.

Boswell's kinsman, John Steuart Erskine, once said of him, 'Boswell had genius, but wanted ballast to counteract his whim. He preferred being a Show man to keeping a Shop of his own.' That evening at Mr. Dilly's must have been

one of the times when his Show became quite out of control, and offended the audience instead of holding it in approving awe. Miss Seward's 'excessive sensibility' and her intellectual pretensions alike suffered when the 'Great Bear,' as Mrs. Barbauld called him, was in a growling mood. But her attacks were chiefly directed against Johnson as author and critic. Lady Ritchie's charming study of Miss Edgeworth and her times, published in *A Book of Sibyls*, gives many particulars of Anna Seward, and quotes a specimen from the portentous collection of her Letters which filled six volumes. The writer asks,

'Is the Fe-fa-fum of literature that snuffs afar the fame of his brother authors, and thirsts for its destruction, to be allowed to gallop unmolested over the fields of criticism? A few pebbles from the well-spring of truth and eloquence are all that is wanted to bring the might of his envy low.'

Miss Seward's indignation was specially roused by Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, and she wrote to Hayley, in 1782, of the

'... cool malignity of its criticism. Yet the *Gentleman's Magazine* praised these unworthy efforts to blight the laurels of undoubted fame. O that the venom might fall where it ought !'

Boswell, after his hero's death, deplored Miss Seward's attempts 'to undermine the noble pedestal on which public opinion has placed Dr. Johnson'; but Croker is far more severe in his strictures, declaring that she 'latterly showed a great deal of malevolence towards Johnson,' and that 'she was obstinate and maintained a very wrong hostility.' It is but fair to see Anna Seward also as she appeared to her friends and admirers. Mr. Edgeworth, on his first visit to Lichfield, described her as 'in the height of youth and beauty, of an enthusiastic temper, a votary of the muses

and of the most eloquent and brilliant conversation.' Her portrait shows

'a dignified person, with an oval face and dark eyes; the thick brown tresses are twined with pearls, her graceful figure is robed in the softest furs and draperies of the period.'<sup>1</sup>

Miss Seward was so secure in her position that she never found it necessary to apologise, like Mrs. Barbauld, for having 'stepped out of the bounds of female reserve in becoming an author'; nor to use her gifts anonymously, as Fanny Burney did when she copied out *Evelina* and offered it to a publisher in a disguised handwriting. Not only in the provincial pool of Lichfield, but in London literary circles, she was an acknowledged Swan; esteemed as a woman of intellect, a poetess, and—perhaps most of all—as the writer of letters which combined studied elegance with a conscious rectitude.

But who would read those voluminous letters for their own merits now? Even in the year of their publication (1811), they provoked that prodigious reader, Miss Mitford, as being 'affected, sentimental, and lackadaisical to the highest degree.' As we might expect on the evidence of that friendly, vivacious face in the National Portrait Gallery, Miss Mitford herself was a delightful correspondent. All the praise and popularity which her writings brought her never made her pose as a Literary Lady; nor did the adversities of her life obscure her natural humour. If a modern critic, bent on recapturing those sentiments which were in favour at the end of the eighteenth century, succeeds in reading even one volume of Anna Seward's Letters, he is unlikely to judge them more mercifully than Miss Mitford—who, kindly though she was, kept sharp weapons for all that

<sup>1</sup> *A Book of Sibyls*, Anne Thackeray Ritchie, 1883.



seemed to her artificial or meretricious. And he will understand Dr. Johnson's attitude towards the lady from his own 'city of philosophers.'

## II.

Richard Lovell Edgeworth and Thomas Day were not the children of Lichfield as Johnson and Anna Seward were—the one by birth, and the other by residence from her early years. But both men, by their sojourn in the peaceful Cathedral town, left lasting impressions of remarkable personalities. Though Croker, referring to Miss Seward's reminiscences of Johnson, declared that 'all that lady's stories were worse than apocryphal,' yet we may accept as accurate—because uncoloured by prejudice—her portraiture of the diverse pair, who were lifelong friends. This is her description of R. L. Edgeworth as she first knew him :

'About the year 1765, came to Lichfield, . . . the young and gay philosopher, Mr. Edgeworth ; a man of fortune, and recently married to a Miss Elers of Oxfordshire . . . Scarcely two-and-twenty, with an exterior yet more juvenile, having mathematic science, mechanic ingenuity, and a competent portion of classical learning, with the possession of the modern languages. . . . He danced, he fenced, he winged his arrows with more than philosophic skill.'

It was the scientific fame of Dr. Darwin which first attracted Edgeworth to Lichfield. He was invited to stay at the Doctor's house, and was at once introduced to Miss Seward, though it appears that Dr. Darwin was another townsman with whom she sometimes quarrelled ; for 'the lady admires his genius, bitterly resents his sarcasms.' On this occasion, too, Edgeworth met Matthew Boulton, the partner of Watt, and was taken by him to study practical mechanics in the Birmingham manufactories. Already

Edgeworth's mind ran on inventions ; he had devised his first telegraphic scheme, and a sailing carriage which was 'light, steady, and ran with amazing velocity' ; though it proved too risky for the roads with their stage-coaches and horses.

Edgeworth's first marriage was a boy-and-girl affair ; it had taken place in Scotland as he was still under age, and his eldest son was born before he was twenty. Though the young husband made the best of his 'early and hasty' choice, and loyally acknowledged his wife's good qualities, she had not the disposition to make him happy—and she 'abhorred' Thomas Day, then a youth of eighteen, who became his chosen companion when the Edgeworths settled at Hare Hatch in 1765. No doubt they were drawn together, in the first place, as students of Rousseau's theories ; Edgeworth himself declared :

'A love of knowledge and a freedom from that admiration of splendour which dazzles and enslaves mankind, were the only points in which we agreed. Mr. Day was grave and of a melancholy temperament ; I was gay and full of constitutional joy ! Mr. Day was not a man of strong passions—I was. Mr. Day was suspicious of the female sex, and averse to risking his happiness for their charms or their society. To a contrary extreme I was fond of all the happiness which they can bestow.'<sup>1</sup>

It has been said that 'willingly or unwillingly, at first hand or from imperfect echoes, every one who studies education must study Rousseau.' At that time, both young men were his ardent disciples, and Edgeworth resolved to bring up little Richard, then barely two years old, on Rousseau's system. The child was accordingly dressed in such simple fashion, and lived in such free conditions, as were 'novel

<sup>1</sup> *The Black Book of Edgeworthstown and other Edgeworth Memories.* Faber and Faber, London, 1927.

and extraordinary' in those days. The result was that he gained—to quote his father—'all the virtues of a child bred in the hut of a savage, and all the knowledge of things which could well be acquired by a boy bred in civilized society.' When he was seven or eight, he accompanied his father and Mr. Day to France; and while staying at Paris, they visited Rousseau, who took the little boy for a long walk, praising his education on their return, but adding that he had discovered 'a propensity to party prejudice,' for whenever they met a handsome horse or carriage the child had hailed it as English. From this Rousseau deduced that the younger Richard would be apt to admire only 'his own country, his own village, his own club,' and be so much influenced by his companions that they would decide his future. R. L. Edgeworth considered that this warning was justified by later events.

The very interesting records of the Edgeworth family, published some years ago, trace their history back to the latter part of the sixteenth century. They show Richard Lovell Edgeworth as the true descendant of his ancestors in his vigorous manhood and high spirits; and they present him as a more attractive character than his daughter's biographers have allowed. Usually he has been charged with overweening vanity and selfish domination, or held responsible for all that appeared stilted and didactic in Maria Edgeworth's writings. But Maria herself always defended him against both accusations; and Adam Buck's pastel of the Edgeworths (reproduced in *The Black Book*) expresses admirably the spirit of life at Edgeworthstown, with the 'large and adoring family' grouped about its head, who is eagerly pointing out something of interest to Maria, from a map or plan spread before him. Throughout his life Edgeworth remained all of one piece with the lively, talented

and empirical young man who disported himself at Lichfield on his first visit. Byron, meeting him in later years, called him 'a boisterous Bore,' but he proved a devoted husband and father, and a remarkably good landlord and administrator on his Irish estate.

In his series of matrimonial ventures he exceeded Coventry Patmore who, after his third marriage, was gravely told by his little son, 'Father, you are just half a Henry VIII.' But Edgeworth's maturer choice was so fortunate that each new stepmother was able to adapt herself to the maze of relationships, and add to the happiness of a family which grew by degrees to a patriarchal tribe. Even now, it is impossible to read without interest the account of his two courtships which had Lichfield for their scene, and were so strangely linked with Thomas Day's.

In spite of his general distrust of women, and his absorption in social and political affairs, Day cannot have been unsusceptible. It is difficult to realise that this serious, philanthropic man who afterwards anglicised and moralised Rousseau in *Sandford and Merton*, was only twenty-two when he went to live at Stow Hill, near Lichfield, in 1770. Edgeworth called him the 'most virtuous human being' he had ever known; but already he appeared eccentric, as Miss Seward explains:

'Powder and fine clothes were at that time the appendages of gentlemen; Mr. Day wore not either. He was tall and stooped in the shoulders, full made but not corpulent, and in his meditative and melancholy air a degree of awkwardness and dignity were blended.'

It was fitting that when Wright of Derby painted his full-length portrait, Day was shown 'meditating in a thunder-storm, leaning against a column inscribed with Hampden's name.'

Edgeworth joined his friend at Christmas, and they were often at the palace, where Honora Sneyd, a beautiful and lively girl, was living with the Sewards. The impression she made on Edgeworth is best told in the words of his own *Memoirs* :

‘ For the first time in my life, I saw a woman that equalled the picture of perfection which existed in my imagination. I had long suffered much from the want of that cheerfulness in a wife, without which marriage could not be agreeable to a man of such a temper as mine. I had borne this evil, I believe, with patience ; but my not being happy at home exposed me to the danger of being too happy elsewhere. Mr. Day alone was blind to the superiority of her character. She danced too well ; she had too much an air of fashion in her dress and manners ; and her arms were not sufficiently round and white to please him.’

But presently Mr. Day, too, came under Honora’s spell, and everything pointed to their engagement and marriage, until he made her a written proposal which contained a full statement of his plan of life—one of ‘ calm seclusion ’ from the world. Her letter in reply gave ‘ an excellent answer to his arguments and a clear dispassionate view of the rights of women,’ finishing with her resolution not to change her lot ‘ for any dark and untried system that could be proposed to her.’ Mr. Day was thrown into a fever by his disappointment, and Dr. Darwin’s skill was needed for body and mind. Fortunately, Honora’s younger sister appeared on the scene soon after, and Elizabeth Sneyd was not only as lovely as Honora, but showed herself more responsive ; for Mr. Day seemed to her inexperience ‘ the most extraordinary and romantic person in the world.’

Elizabeth, however, was not indifferent to externals, and insisted that, before she could accept Mr. Day, he must gain ‘ some of those polite accomplishments which he so

much despised.' It was this stipulation which led to the visit to France already mentioned. Edgeworth's admiration for Honora had become warmer since she broke off relations with his friend ; he and Day were completely in each other's confidence, even in these delicate affairs, and the younger man's repeated exhortations on the subject of ' virtue and honour ' moved Edgeworth to leave Lichfield immediately. They travelled together and settled at Lyons, where Mr. Day, in fulfilment of his promise to Elizabeth Sneyd, devoted seven or eight hours daily to the improvement of his figure, and the athletic exercises which he detested. Meanwhile, Edgeworth employed himself in learning French, and in the congenial task of helping Perrache in a scheme for extending the area of Lyons by diverting the Rhone's course. Before the whole of his engineering devices could be carried out, Mr. Day, ' having learnt all that it was possible for riding, fencing, and dancing masters to teach him,' set out for England to claim the reward of those distasteful efforts. In March, 1773, Edgeworth followed him, on hearing that his wife had died a few days after the birth of their fourth child.

Mr. Day, rejoicing that he could now further his friend's attachment, hastened to meet him and tell him of Honora's well-being, and that she was still free, though much sought after. Edgeworth pressed on to Lichfield, ' found Honora more enchanting than ever ' and, after a few months' interval, they were married in the Cathedral. Once more Thomas Day had the grief and mortification of being rejected, for Elizabeth Sneyd decided that his acquired graces were more ridiculous than pleasing, and that she could not feel for him the kind of affection which would ensure a happy marriage. Three years later, having recovered from this blow, he was once more in search of the ideal wife. A friend found for him a certain wise lady, with the ' white and large

arms' and 'long petticoats' which he desired, and whose only serious drawback—that of having a large fortune—Day overcame by having the whole settled on her. She accepted him and his foibles wholeheartedly; and after their marriage he continued to work out his agricultural theories and benevolent schemes in the country, until his sudden death in 1789.

Elizabeth Sneyd was destined to become the third Mrs. Edgeworth, for after seven years of great happiness, the lovely Honora died—first urging Edgeworth to marry again, and recommending her younger sister to him. He moved to Lichfield after her death, and there found consolation in Elizabeth's presence. Before long, Honora's wish became their own; in spite of private and public opposition, they were married in London on Christmas Day, 1780, with Mr. Day as one of their two witnesses.

Thomas Day, 'an English disciple of Rousseau,' was chosen some years ago for the subject of Sir Michael Sadler's Rede Lecture—a fitting tribute to the man who, like his own *Mr. Barlow*, was 'the common friend of all his species,' and concerned, above all, with the cause of education. He loved both England and the freedom of mankind not less ardently than Cobbett; and, different though their mediums of expression are, it is easy to find the same impulse in Cobbett's invective against pomp and idleness, and the irony which, in *Sandford and Merton*, was brought to bear on 'smuggled foreign graces,' and the fashionable belief that 'the first qualification of a gentleman is never to do anything useful.'

Perhaps Thomas Day, with his unworldly standards, his sturdy idealism and integrity, lacked only the gift of personal magnetism to become a leader of social reform in his own country and generation—not merely an eighteenth-century Don Quixote of the nursery and schoolroom.

## THE UNSEEN LARK.

*I hear, as in a reverie  
 Of happiness, the minutes fly,  
 The unseen lark, like poetry  
 Aloft, and singing in the sky.*

*I see the hills, in splendour clad,  
 That dance, and clap their hands in glee :  
 I greet the dream, that once I had,  
 That men were just, and could be free !*

*That dream was slain, in yonder wood,  
 Where ancient wrong is newly-born :  
 Huge phantoms rise,—a hellish brood  
 Of lies, and waste, and fear, and scorn.*

*The cloud that once, in Noah's reign,  
 Drowned the four corners of the land,  
 Is black with imminence again—  
 God's rainbow quivers in his hand.*

*And yet, while in a reverie  
 Of happiness, the hours go by,  
 I hear the lark, like poetry  
 Aloft, and singing in the sky.*

PHILIP MAGNUS.

*Great North Road : Easter, 1938.*



*THE LESSER JUNGLE-FOLK.*

BY LT.-COL. C. H. STOCKLEY.

LYING on my bed one afternoon, trying to master the latest Olympian effusion on the economy which so seldom seems to begin on Mount Olympus, my thoughts wandered to the multitude of birds and small mammals which impinge, to a greater or less degree, on one's life when camping, or just trying to exist, in India.

It was the ravens which started the train of thought. The dreary frontier station was infested with these birds, which, presuming on some slight services rendered to the cantonment sweepers, did their best to drive to frenzy the unfortunate inhabitants of the Government bungalows.

These bungalows were square, with a bachelor quarter at each corner, the main rooms in the centre and the bathrooms, etc., ranged round outside. As the bathroom roofs were about four feet lower than the main roof covering the bigger rooms, these latter had four little clerestory windows, opening outward, to each of them. The frames opened horizontally and were protected with wooden shades and wire gauze to keep out the flies.

These horrible birds took all these factors into consideration when amusing themselves at the expense of the inmates. First they had their all-the-year-round games, played at any time of the day, when it was not too hot in summer or too cold in winter. The best of them was played with a bone ; preferably the nobbly end of a large leg-bone, but any bone would serve, and a stone was used if a suitable bone could not be found.

Having acquired the right kind of toy, the bird would take it up on to the chimney and drop it. It would rattle down the galvanised iron roof, bound with a crash on to the lower roof, rattle down that again, and then fall to the ground. It was then retrieved and taken to the highest point to be dropped again. If four or five efforts did not produce a satisfactory result in the shape of a maddened officer bursting out, just in time to see a large black bird slip away on the blind side of the bungalow, a variant was introduced.

The raven decided that its efforts were being frustrated owing to the intended victim being in his dressing-room, while the rattle was mostly over the box-room. So the bone was taken to the edge of the upper roof, dropped on the roof of the dressing-room and, as it rattled slowly down, the raven flopped on to the lower roof and slid down it with a dreadful scraping noise, just in time to retrieve the bone before it reached the edge; the foul bird then hopped loudly up the slope, said 'Glonk ! Glonk !' in a raucous penetrating voice through the clerestory window, and did it all over again. A few repetitions of this would make a corvidical maniac of an earnest officer trying to work for the Staff College, or one who had been on the range since dawn and was attempting to pass the hottest hours of a punkah-less day in a little well-earned slumber. He would rush out to throw stones at the miscreant, who heard him coming and took flight with a derisive 'Kwark ! Kwark !' long before the would-be avenger could lay hands on a missile.

The above games were very popular in the early hours of a Sunday morning, and were quite convincing evidence that the raven is an emissary of the devil.

One afternoon I discovered a further devilry. It was

very hot and, trying to sleep, I became aware of scrapings and scuffings on the roof below the north clerestory windows, which indicated that more than one raven was sheltering there in the shade. The windows were open and, looking up from my bed, I could see the reflections of two ravens in the underside of the glass. They were moderately quiet and I could not be bothered to go out and chase them away, until I was roused by a repeated metallic twang and scraping noise.

Watching the reflections I saw that both ravens were amusing their idle hour by driving their bills up to the hilt through the wire gauze, in order that another pest, the flies, might be enabled to enter four abreast without difficulty. I slipped out through the bathroom door and dispersed four of the loathly birds, who went and sat on the mud wall of the compound uttering mocking 'Kwarks' until I fetched a gun, when they cleared off.

Further wooing of sleep was futile, and I pondered on the number of pests which have to be endured in India, particularly when camping in the jungle, and the awful amount of bad language for which they are responsible. Even one Hot-weather Bird is sufficient to give the Recording Angel writer's cramp when it turns up at 4 a.m. and, from a tree just above one's bed, screams up the scale in reiterated attempts to reach A in alt; its voice breaking on a high note every time: on a day when, after a long spell of early rising, the sportsman is trying to make up arrears of lost sleep.

Among pests I do not include snakes. They are not pests, they are a Terror.

Flies and mosquitoes are so universal that they may be regarded as a matter of course; all except that solitary one which gets inside the mosquito curtain and trumpets thinly

in one's ear just as one is on the point of dropping off to sleep ; or settles persistently on the tip of one's nose in the first light of dawn. Perhaps the Recording Angel takes on to his staff the souls of the failed B.A.'s, when overworked in the hot weather. It would be grand compensation for them for jobs refused, or held under irritable Sahibs at that rather wearing season of the year.

But to return to the corvine tribe. The raven himself is not often encountered when encamping, though the Tibetan variety will follow a caravan from camp to camp on that windy plateau ; but his lesser brethren, the House Crow and the Jungle Crow, are common. The House Crow, one of whose tribe welcomed me to India by stealing the toast of my first *chota hazri* from beside my bed, only accompanies us to the edge of the forest, but the Jungle Crow is with us from there to the edge of the snows. Perhaps we are a bit hard on the Jungle Crow, the villainies of the House Crow reflecting on him ; for though he is a pilferer, and his raucous cawing is an offence to the quiet of the forest, he is neither so bold nor so cunning as the House Crow, and may even be made use of to do a job of work in the shape of cleaning skulls of the little pieces of flesh remaining in odd corners, while two or three of them will often spend several useful hours picking unwanted tissues off a pegged-out skin.

It is extraordinary how Jungle Crows will turn up from nowhere when there is the least chance of something to eat. You may sit down to lunch in the forest without a sign of one anywhere and, almost before the sandwiches are out of the *havre-sac*, a glossy black crow alights on a nearby tree with a loud caw. He is not so near that he is in any danger, and he inspects you carefully and warily at first, but soon decides on your harmlessness, and will usually come nearer and nearer until he is on a low branch over your head, or

even on the ground in front of you. A crust from a sandwich is seized on and devoured, and he hops closer asking for more, while, in a minute or two, one or more of his friends will turn up to compete decorously for fragments ; wiping their bills and cocking bright beady eyes at you until lunch is over. Three of them once arrived on top of a ridge at about 10,000 feet among the pines, and I tossed them bits of cheese rind into the snow on the shady side. The cheese was much appreciated, but was evidently found to be thirsty stuff, for after each mouthful a dollop of snow was gulped down and wings stretched, until it was evident that the morsel had reached the right spot and the bird was ready for more contributions.

The worst pests in camp, by far, are pariah dogs. In cantonments they can be fairly offensive, but are comparatively scarce, owing to the activities of the dog-shooter at eight annas a tail, and are mainly confined to the bazaar ; so that their howling is too distant to affect slumber, while their thieving is reduced to a very occasional raid on the servants' quarters. But in camp, if there be a village within a mile, the brutes are perpetually in evidence and there is little defence against their bold pilfering, except by constant and wearing vigilance, with the final argument of the gun. The latter is usually both repugnant and undesirable, as the villagers may resent the reduction of their sanitary squad and one's popularity suffers, with a consequent dearth of local assistance and supplies.

Still one can be driven too far, when, night after night, the mangy beasts come singly or in companies, to stay till dawn ; emitting that maddening series of hysterical crescendo yelps, utterly different to the bark of any civilised canine, which banishes all hope of sleep.

As a thief the pariah is daring and persistent beyond belief.

I have left my tent for three minutes and returned to find a pi tearing at the pocket of the inner fly, trying to get at the lower jaw of a blackbuck intended for use in mounting with the head. I have had the skull of a barking deer snatched from my table by a tip-and-run raid, and an entire Sind Ibex skin removed from the verandah of a dak bungalow while I was inside within three yards of the open door, and unaware that there was a pi-dog within ten miles. Most of the raids are directed on the kitchen tent, but there are usually two or three men watching there and it is harder to evade notice ; but any small article left on the ground near the fly will be pulled out. I have had a large leather-covered basket (called a *kilta* in Kashmir) taken fifty yards into a clump of bushes and, in spite of close pursuit, the leather had a fifteen-inch rent and the wickerwork was broken, when it was recovered within three or four minutes.

Once retribution overtook the thief. My bearer had left a quarter-full tin of butter outside the kitchen tent, while he rummaged in a box inside for raisins for cake-making. When he emerged a pariah was thirty yards away extracting the butter from the tin, jaws thrust well down into it. There were other and bigger dogs about which might deprive him of his booty, so it had to be disposed of quickly. The bearer attacked swiftly with a handful of stones, and the pi fled with the tin over his muzzle, both jaws fixed firmly inside it, emitting muffled sounds indicating discomfort.

Hearing the row my terrier dashed out and assaulted from the rear, chasing the pi off the camping ground, until other pi's, attracted by the uproar and seeing one of their fraternity apparently in possession of some great prize, joined in to try and wrest it from him. Result a wretched mongrel, unable to defend himself, rolled over and bitten

every few yards while trying to escape, until the riot disappeared from view and hearing in the scrub jungle leading to the village.

From the pariah it is an easy transition to that handsome scourge of the jungle, the Indian Wild Dog. In spite of this red pest's appalling destructiveness and the manner in which they will entirely ruin one's sport by driving away all game, it is impossible not to admire them. Their looks and courage are both of the highest quality; their hunting parties give way to none of the jungle-folk but the elephant and wild boar; not even to My Lord the Tiger. Their relentless pertinacity and clever teamwork make almost certain the fate of any animal they may elect to pursue, even their fellow scourge the leopard, and I have even had a barking deer pulled down in the middle of a beat by a pack of a dozen in the Central Provinces.

But the red dog seldom directly interferes with man, while elephants do, and, where they exist, I am inclined to rate them as the most aggravating creatures to be met with.

Bison and tsine are fond of attaching themselves to elephant herds, to browse on the tender leaves of the branches pulled down by the monsters and overlooked by them. Perhaps a bison is being followed up and you are getting close, when suddenly there appears an enormous pair of dark grey trousers hanging from the lower branches of a shady tree. Amazed by this phenomenon you halt, then realise that a few yards away is the hinder end of a drowsy elephant. If it remains drowsy you slip back and, after a careful reconnaissance which reveals the basements of other elephants here and there, try to circle round to leeward of the herd, hoping to pick up the bison's track on the far side. The coast seems clear when, on slipping round a bush, you run into a wretched little elephant calf which rushes to mamma, who has all the

time been standing about twenty-five yards away. The next moment you are flattened against a tree, pretending to be a bit of moss, while a hysterical female pachyderm charges up to within a few feet and stands there, for what seems to be several hours before lumbering off, making little feminine noises undoubtedly meant to express what she would do to you if she caught you ; the wretched little cause of all the trouble trotting along under the shelter of the overhang of mother's bulk.

In the meantime your native assistants have vanished and are recovered with difficulty, the bison's tracks have been hopelessly messed up by the departing herd, and you go back to camp feeling the urgent need of a strong drink.

One or two experiences of this kind, knowing that if you have to shoot in self-defence the Forest Department will, on principle, disbelieve your story and try to fine you heavily, will embitter one towards the whole tribe of elephant, wild or as pets : while even having to give up tracking a long-sought bull bison or tsine because elephants have pulled down an acre or more of bamboo like giant spillikins all over the trail, rendering further progress impossible, does not endear them to you.

Monkeys are great spoil-sports, and langurs perhaps the worst of them. They are not content to clear off quietly, and the way they hang about and whoop and swear and crash among the branches, all within easy range, shows that they are in no danger, but only behave like that through cussedness. The little macaques are nearly as bad, though not so noisy, and will actually follow one in the treetops above.

I had one most promising stalk spoilt by these little beasts. I was after a couple of tsine bulls, one of them a grey bull with a grand head, and the other a dark bay, also with horns



above the average. I had tracked them for two days, having one glimpse of them on the first day ; then followed them for over twenty miles on the second, as they changed feeding grounds. On the third day I had puzzled out their trail from their early morning feed in small forest, through the dense cover of a plantation of young teak ; across a bamboo-filled bottom, and up a ridge on whose flat top a sambar stag was wallowing in a rain-filled hollow.

My bulls had also indulged in a bath, and clots of mud and drippings led down the further slope, the larger clots still only half-dried on that sultry July day ; so that they could not be far ahead. At the foot of the descent the ground sloped gently up from the further bank of a shallow ravine in little ridges and gullies covered with mixed forest but little undergrowth, to unite two hundred yards higher up in larger ridges, which merged into the hillside where a big shelf bulged out. Somewhere below this shelf, or possibly on the very edge of it (for no tsine bull would lie down so that an enemy could approach from below under cover), it was most probable that those two bulls were resting, looking back on their tracks. The hoof-marks were plain in the soft black earth below, and I could keep under cover while examining the ground ahead with field-glasses before showing myself on top of the next rise, and could trace their tracks nearly a hundred yards away, where they showed like a dark line on the reddish soil of the hillside facing me.

The first trouble was a Silver Pheasant. He was standing flaunting himself on a flat piece of ground just the other side of a small rise, and not ten yards from me. He seemed to be alone, and showing off for his own delectation : practising for a party perhaps. Fortunately I caught sight of his long white tail before he saw me, and retired hastily,

knowing that if I came on him at such close quarters he would rise with enough clatter and fuss to warn every tsine in the jungle for half a mile around. So I went back, showed myself about forty yards away, and the handsome bird ran off swiftly and quietly into the undergrowth.

On again, and some hundred yards in front there came in sight a patch of hillside, near the crest of a ridge and just below the big shelf, which was criss-crossed with several dark lines—the tracks of the two bulls. Now tsine, once they have finished feeding, usually make straight for the ground where they mean to lie up for the day, and it is only when they are picking the exact resting-place that they meander round a little before making a final choice. My bulls were very close.

I made the two Burmans sit down in a little hollow and crawled up to a point from which I could examine the crest of the further ridge. A slight movement in the deep shade of a bamboo clump. Again : the glasses show the head of the bay bull behind some young growth, and the movement is the flicking of an ear. The rest of the bull is hidden below the crest of the ridge.

More searching reveals the stern of the grey bull just showing beyond the base of a big tree, fifteen yards below the other. Now, if I crawl another fifty yards up my little ridge, I ought to get a clear shot into the broad back of the big grey fellow.

Just then a twig hits me in the back of the neck, abruptly interrupting my planning. I look up into a little wizened face peering at me from the boughs of a tree thirty feet above me. As the horrid little monkey catches my eye he opens his mouth wide and scolds me, saying 'Aah ! Aah !' Two or three more join him, and, peeping over the shoulders of the first, scold and throw down more twigs. I look

forward towards the tsinc. Both bulls are on their feet, only their heads showing above the top of the ridge. What a wonderful pair of horns the grey bull has got ! More sticks and swearwords from above. The grey bull disappears, moving upwards, and a few seconds later his head appears over a mound from which he has outflanked my cover and can see me lying in full view. His head swings round and disappears ; there is a series of diminuendo crashes, and I have seen the last of those two bulls. I rise, fling some ineffective stones and curses at the gibbering little beasts above, receive in return sticks, unripe mangos and more scoldings, then turn back for camp. Sport is over for the day.

The only silver lining to the monkey cloud is the amusement which they occasionally, and unintentionally, provide. One October my camp in Kashmir happened to be in the line of march of a large troop of macaques, which were moving down to their winter quarters in the Himalayan foothills. They halted all round my camp, inquisitive but rather nervous ; bouncing from pine tree to ground and back again, then sitting about chattering, ever getting a little nearer. I retired into my tent and sat down to write a letter. Suddenly there was a scuffle in the bathroom and I dashed round just in time to see a big male monkey scampering up the hillside with my cake of soap in his hand. Having reached a safe distance he turned round, halted on all fours and, having pushed the cake of soap into his cheek-pouch, gibbered at me. It was obviously no use trying to recover the soap, so I sat down on a fallen log expecting to be entertained, and was not disappointed.

The monkey, the biggest male of the band, seeing me apparently resigned to my loss, also seated himself facing me. He took out the cake of soap, then, slightly dissatisfied,

worked an exploring finger round the inside of his mouth to remove any unpleasant flavour remaining. However, he was not discouraged and, evidently drawn on by the admiring attention of several others which had gathered round to see what he had got, holding the soap in both hands, he first smelt it all over, then took a large bite out of it and began to chew.

The soap was of a brand which guarantees a rich creamy lather, and it came up to scratch magnificently. He had only just decided that he did not like the taste, when a line of white began to show between his lips, and doubt and dissatisfaction clouded the wrinkled face of the thief. He put a hooked finger in his mouth and withdrew it with a blob of foam on the end. He threw away the remains of the soap and worked both hands vigorously extracting lather and flinging it on the ground, spat and swore at me, while his brethren, evidently alarmed at his appearance, drew back scolding.

Finally the whole band fled and left him, disappearing into the pine forest, chattering hard, while he loped behind, still spitting and extracting lather with either hand. That soap was undoubtedly of excellent quality.

On another occasion the laugh was definitely on the side of the monkey. It was in Rajputana, where monkeys are sacred, and riding out one morning through a village with Peter, my terrier, we came on a monkey sitting in the middle of the village street, listlessly scratching itself. Peter halted with uplifted paw. He was accustomed to see monkeys flee up trees and on to rooftops at our approach, and was much intrigued by a monkey which took no notice of us. He advanced gingerly, head outstretched, nostrils working, until within a couple of feet of the apparently uninterested simian. Suddenly the monkey leant forward, a long arm

shot out and caught Peter a terrific box on the ear and, a second later, the monkey was on a roof chattering derision at Peter leaping about below and literally screaming with rage.

Monkeys are deliberate malefactors, but in constant accidental upsetting of one's plans the pheasant tribe are easily top. Among the pheasants I include the Red and Grey Junglefowl, and various species of these gallinaceous birds (which merely means relations of the Common or Barndoor Fowl) are everywhere, from the dense forests of Lower Burma to the barren mountains of the Karakoram.

High on a snow-streaked ridge a Snow Cock will sit, and from there spy the hunter stalking a herd of ibex. The bird is in no danger, but will begin to whistle fretfully. The hunter looks up and sees the round dark spot on a rock against the skyline, mutters 'Damn that bird !' and subsides behind cover to wait, hoping that the senseless fowl will go away quietly. Not a bit. The piping lessens to a faint one-a-minute rate and ceases ; but the moment the hunter moves on it starts again, loud and peevish, until the bird finally flies downhill, often within a few yards of the man, uttering a series of loud wailing whistles. Of course the ibex have heard the clamour and, even if they do not actually move off, direct unremitting vigilance on the locality and are almost impossible to approach.

Other pheasants usually wait until the last minute to spring up under one's feet, dispersing with the maximum of clatter and vocal effort, which makes the perspiring hunter think that the glorious shining blue of a cock monal, set off by an orange and white tail, ought really to be the black and scarlet livery of Satan.

Junglefowl do the same thing, except that they are usually content with the noise of their uprising and do not bother

to crow or cluck, but it is sufficient to warn every other inhabitant of the jungle for a quarter of a mile round. Why the fool birds, which must have seen or heard the intruder long before, cannot run off quietly instead of squatting until he almost treads on them, is an unsolved problem.

Another spoil-sport, which has not even the gallinaceous virtue of being good to eat, is the Brahminy Duck of the sportsman in India, whose 'trivial name,' in the language of the scientist, is the 'Ruddy Sheldrake': most of us who have shot duck in India lay emphasis on the adjective.

These maddening fowl sit out on some unapproachable spot commanding a wide view, such as the end of a sandspit, and constitute themselves the guardians of every bird within hearing. Their eyesight is acute in the extreme and, as they catch sight of a toiling sportsman, they begin their harsh and dreary call, from which the Indian has given them the name of *Chakwa*. The legend is that they are tenanted by the souls of two lovers, who were caught when eloping, and slain on either side of a river by the pursuers. Now they call across the river to each other, 'Chakwa!'—'Chakwi!' The indignant sportsman, who has spent a morning seeing chance after chance at duck or geese spoilt by these interfering birds, usually utters a pious hope that they may be thoroughly unhappy throughout their reincarnation.

Of course the outstanding blister on a sportsman's temper, whether bird or beast, is the Kiang, or Tibetan Wild Ass. Those who have met him while in pursuit of *ovis ammon* or *bharal* deplete their vocabularies of every abusive adjective in trying to describe the antics of the brute. The first seen of them is usually an ugly brown coffin head, on a light brown neck topped by an untidy black mane, gazing over a small rise some two or three hundred yards away. You are probably trying to evade the sharp eyes of some herd

which contains the ram you have been searching for for some days, and which you have marched three hundred miles to hunt.

Showing keen interest in your movements, the Kiang will come forward on top of the rise and stand gazing for a minute or two. A whisk of the stringy black tail, and he will trot fifty yards to a flank to have a look from a different angle. This does not satisfy him, and he will suddenly fling his heels in the air and gallop back a hundred yards, then halt for another look. By this time the attention of the beasts being stalked has been aroused, and you are cowering behind a rock, or in a little gutter, pretending to be a part of the landscape.

The Kiang departs out of sight behind his ridge, the objects of the stalk begin to feed again, and you carry on, thinking that your tormentor has gone for good. Oh dear no ! He has a generous nature and has merely gone to fetch some of his pals to share his fun.

There is a clatter behind, and you look back to see five Kiang move up in line on to that ridge ; halt, dress by the right, and stand to gaze. You sit quiet for a bit, and, as they do nothing, you move on again. The Kiang turn into file and walk parallel to you, halting to turn and stare whenever you halt. Their drill is perfect and occasionally they vary things, when you stop too long, by a trot round in follow-my-leader fashion, returning to the same spot for another stare.

Of course it is inevitable that the herd you are after realises that there is something wrong, and moves off at a steady pace which takes them two miles away and over the next big ridge in the next quarter of an hour, and you sit up to swear at the Kiang.

This is the signal for the parade to dismiss. One play-

fully kicks his neighbour in the ribs, while another tries to bite a friend's ear, and the whole party gallop off raising a cloud of dust, bristly black manes erect, tails streaming, expressing at every stride what a delightful morning they have spent.

But perhaps the spoil-sleep is as bad as the spoil-sport. Flies and mosquitoes can be defeated by the use of nets, but noises cannot be kept out. In the hottest hours of the day, when game animals lie down to rest and the hunter seeks compensation for loss of sleep consequent on having to rise in the small hours, the monotonous 'Kok-kok-kok . . .' of the Coppersmith becomes maddening in its eternal reiteration. This wretched little bird, which is a stumpy green barbet with a yellow and red face and throat, is reputed to live on fruit, particularly wild figs. If this is so, then its ration must be a fig a day and no more; for it does not feed at night, and cannot possibly have time to eat more, judging by the continuity of its vocal efforts. One of these birds is said to have brought off a run of nearly five hundred continuous 'Kok's,' and another put in over seven hundred with only two beats' rest at half-time. These were counted by patients in hospital, who had nothing else to do and were not sleepy: yet it is strange that they remained sane. Perhaps they did not.

The Coppersmith's larger cousin, the Blue-throated Barbet, repeats his 'Kooturruk' rapidly at intervals, while the Green Barbet is evidently short of carbo-hydrates, for it maintains a clamour for 'Beurre-re-re, butter, butter, butter,' and the Great Himalayan Barbet makes noises like a kitten heard through a loud-speaker. Altogether they are a very noisy family.

But all these can be overcome by the really determined sleeper, while the strong-minded even turn them into a



lullaby, substituting the counting of 'Kok's' for that of sheep going through a gate, in order to induce sleep ; whereas that yelling fiend the Koel is always successful in ruining slumber.

The early morning is the favourite time for the koel's efforts, though he does not restrict himself to any time of the day. A series of ear-piercing shrieks, accompanied by the cawing of a dozen furious crows, heralds and follows the flight of a red-eyed black bird, about the size of a dove, as it twists and turns through the trees pursued by its corvine enemies. The koel is the only bird, or living creature for that matter, which consistently scores off that cunning impudent thief and bully, the Indian House Crow. For the red-eyed fugitive is the cock koel, and, while the crows are busy hunting him, his mate, which is sober brown, spotted and barred with white, and much like our English cuckoo, slips into a crow's nest, turns out an egg, and lays one of her own in place of it ; which the deluded foster parents later rear, with an expenditure of labour and brainwork which would inevitably cause their deaths from remorse if they were to discover the fraud. Possibly the crow expends so much grey matter in obtaining food by foul and villainous means, that in its domestic life it gives its brain a complete rest to recuperate ; otherwise it is incredible that so brainy a bird should have no doubts as to the authenticity of the substitutes.

To the koel's brother, the Hot-weather Bird, I have already referred. I could say much more about him.

If sleep come reluctantly at night in the beginning of the hot weather, there is always the Indian Nightjar to help keep it away. Sometimes he says 'Chock !' usually 'Chock ! Chock !' and sometimes repeats 'Chock' up to thirty times or more. His spasms vary, and once the

would-be sleeper starts listening to them it is fatal to all hope of slumber ; for the tension becomes unbearable, wondering whether there is going to be one ' Chock ! ' or a score.

In Burma the Tuk-too, an ugly stumpy-tailed lizard, replaces the nightjar, if anything for the worse. The largest number of ' Tuk-too's ' I have heard the reptile utter is eleven, but three to five is more usual, while the Burmans say it is lucky to hear it call seven times. It begins by clearing its throat, as if it were winding itself up ; then, having let off one or more ' Tuk-too's,' it will end with a long sighing ' ooh.' Quite often it will clear its throat and produce no further sound, at other times it will emit a ' Tuk ' and no ' too.' Frequently it will fail to complete the third or fourth ' Tuk-too ! ' and leave the audience waiting in suspense for the ' too.' Once a sleeper gets interested in listening to the reptile all hope of further sleep is gone. The long-drawn suspense waiting for the next call, the throat-clearing, then counting the ' Tuk-too's,' and the irritation engendered by being left in the air with an unfinished ' Tuk- ', creates a thirst for blood which may drive the human to seeking for the performer with a gun. A hopeless enterprise. It may be in a hollow tree, in the roof, behind an open window, or clinging to the underside of a palm leaf ; the sound is almost impossible to locate exactly.

All the pests dealt with so far are gratuitously aggravating, but the wild bees, which are most feared of all, have usually to be annoyed before they attack. But run into a nest in the jungle, when on the back of an elephant, or light a camp fire under a tree containing one, and you will be very sorry. The wise carry blankets in the howdah under which to retire in case of such misfortune, and they carefully inspect the upper branches of the trees under which they camp.

Only once have I seen the bees make an unprovoked assault. It was in the Dun, and an old villager was gathering sticks a hundred yards away under some lofty trees, in the tops of which were a few bees' nests. Suddenly he threw himself on the ground, clapping his hands to his head, and remained absolutely still for several minutes. He then rose and came over to show me his naked back, from which I extracted a dozen stings, then rubbed in ammonia to ease the pain. If he had not kept so still the consequences would have been serious : but what caused the bees to take such sudden offence is a mystery. Recently I was camped in the Central Provinces under some trees by the side of a wide and sandy river-bed. There had been a steady breeze for the two days we had been there, but at sunset on the third day it suddenly fell. In five minutes every soul in camp was fleeing from it. The smoke from the kitchen fire had gone straight up into the huge pekul above, and disturbed two small bees' nests, hitherto unperceived. Fortunately it was soon dark, and the bees allowed us to go back, to shift camp as soon as possible.

But who takes these minor pests so seriously as to weigh them against the compensations of jungle life, and the many friendly birds and animals which come to see and entertain us when in camp.

What pleasanter sound is there than the mellow fluting of the Golden Oriole, what colouring more lovely than that of the butterflies which float along the forest fire-line or crowd the margin of a forest pool. Has any tame animal the grace of a gibbon swinging thirty feet at a leap from bough to bough ; of a blackbuck jumping high above six-foot millet ; or of the long slanting vol-plane of a flying squirrel from the walnut tree it has been plundering, to end in a short upward glide which lands it, with a soft thud, on

the trunk of another. Even the little squirrels, which run about the camp in the plains, or the Did-he-do-it pacing beside the daily diminishing stream are familiar friends which welcome us back every year.

Can anything in civilisation beat one of nature's dramas which I once witnessed in Kashmir. A Fishing Eagle stooped from a great plane tree above me on to a snow trout in the shallows, sending the water flying. Then stood amidst the sunlit ripples, one foot holding down his struggling prey, the other gripping the gravelly bottom ; plumage sparkling with drops of water, hackles up, screaming his triumph to his mate above.

*Nyeri, Kenya.*

## MODERN MIDDLE AGES.

BY GAMEL WOOLSEY.

IF you could visit the Middle Ages—if you could, safely, easily, sitting in Mr. H. G. Wells' Time Machine travel back with the speed of light and find yourself walking in a medieval city among its strange, brightly coloured crowds, would you do it? If it cost, say, thirty pounds, would you pay? Most of us would, I think, even though it might mean getting ourselves involved in disconcerting medieval adventures as happened to the children in E. Nesbitt's books when with the aid of magic they visited the past. But we think regretfully that in our workaday modern world it is impossible. There are no Time Machines, no Wishing Rings, no Magic Carpets. Yet, strangely enough, we *can* visit the Middle Ages, and it can be done for even less than thirty pounds.

The Middle Ages still exist, unchanged, unaltered. It is not a question of travelling through *Time*, but through *space*. If you take a second-class steamer ticket from England to Tangiers it will cost eight pounds, a return will cost twelve; there are large comfortable steamers every few days sailing from various English ports. If you are in a hurry you can take an aeroplane instead. When you get to Tangiers take the train or take the bus—either will cost you less than ten shillings—to Fez. It is quite simple, you are there in a few hours. Yet, when you reach Fez you have arrived in the Middle Ages. There you are, you recognise it at once, not the place, but the Time.

There are the narrow streets under the overhanging

houses brimming with crowded, noisy life. Tall, bearded men in hoods and gowns pass by talking. Rich, fat men on sleek, grey mules with servants running ahead to clear a path force their way through the crowds; lords from the country on fine horses with small retinues ride by, scorning the 'citizens,' like knights of old; poor men, half-naked in the dust, drive their laden mules and donkeys crying, 'Balek! Balek! Ware! Ware!' or themselves carry huge burdens on their heads.

As we entered the *souks*, or markets, we passed rows of blind beggars standing in the gateway, chanting in unison. We gave them some copper coins: they did not thank us or bless us like European beggars, but turning away praised Allah to whom alone praise and thanks are due since he ordained that the traveller should pass at this hour and give this gift. In other towns in Morocco I have actually seen veiled lepers begging in the streets.

The *souks* are collections of little open-faced shops built along very narrow streets which are sometimes roofed, or covered with lattices supporting ancient, gnarled vines. Each trade is housed in a separate quarter, and each trade has its guild which regulates prices and qualities. It does not, however, regulate what prices the sellers may *ask*, and bargaining is as intense as it must have been in Cheapside in the fourteenth century when country bumpkins and country squires complained of the sharp practices of shopkeepers and their prentices.

Walking through the *souks*, you pass from the sellers of wool to the dyers, to the weavers, to the tailors, to the sellers of finished robes. Far away a metallic ringing grows louder and louder as you approach it, through the shops of the leather-workers and the slipper-sellers, the cobblers and the saddle-makers. It is the quarter of the metal-workers.

Enormous cauldrons of white iron lie in the streets, big enough for Siegfried to take his dragon's-blood bath in, copper trays and water-jugs, brass samovars and kettles of ordinary English pattern perched on little charcoal stoves, fill the workrooms. Master and man sit cross-legged on the ground beating out new utensils or mending old ones.

I was particularly pleased with the tailors' quarter. The tailors sat cross-legged on their benches, sewing together the hoods and gowns and robes, the *bjebellahs* and *burnooses*. In the street outside stood their little shaven-headed prentices, boys of seven or eight holding the bobbins of the silk their masters were using. As the man sewed the boy twisted the bobbin in and out to make a chain stitch, like an ordinary sewing-machine stitch. As I was watching them a man came by nearly naked and stained a deep blue like an ancient Briton. He was a journeyman dyer, dyeing with indigo.

But it was difficult to stand still to watch anything for the constant stream of jostling humanity pouring like a river down the narrow streets, heavily veiled women in shapeless wrappings, old men, young men, tinker, tailor, beggarman, thief.

Once, in the narrow streets, we met a strange procession and were carried back far beyond medieval times to the Classical youth of the world. A group of old men appeared leading three red cows whose horns were decorated with silk shawls and flowers. Young men went before them blowing on brazen trumpets which might have brought down the walls of Jericho, and old men danced in the street before them as David danced before the Lord. It was, we were told, a guild of Berber merchants from the country taking their offerings to a Mosque to which they were attached.

We left Fez with regret, but Morocco has so many exciting places to visit, and we had little time to see so much

in. Everywhere we found good, inexpensive hotels, excellent French cooking, and comfortable motor-buses. And Moroccan cooking itself is delicious, but too rich and medieval for everyday use; though I have never tasted or imagined such roast chicken as I ate in a Moorish restaurant in Fez, the flesh melting from the bones in delicious succulence.

One great charm of Morocco is the completely unspoiled nature of the cities. The new French quarter is always separate from the old town and at some distance from it, so that you can often wander about for days without even seeing another European.

From Fez we went by bus to Azrou to see the giant cedars and great holm oak forests. Though the country has only been opened up within the last few years there are comfortable inns and a winter station with quite good ski-ing, I believe. It is a wild, romantic place, and we were happy to have seen the great forests, but we went on, as there was no snow yet, to Beni-Mellal, a small town set in enchantingly beautiful country, in a watered plain among hills and mountains with great groves of 'olives of endless age.' I was delighted to see there young Jewish girls of a really exquisite beauty, their dark plaits of hair looking almost too heavy for the delicate heads they crowned. They were kneeling by the river washing their clothes, some distance from the town, for they have to use a different washing place from the arrogant Arabs. We could not talk to them, for they knew no French, but we smiled at one another and each in his own tongue wished the other well. I lingered looking back, for these lovely Jewish girls in their brightly coloured dresses and fringed head handkerchiefs kneeling by the clear stream were truly a charming sight, like some lovely scene from the Old Testament.



We had visited a harem in Fez, but I cannot say that I was impressed by the pleasures of harem life. There were only two wives (much marrying, except among *caids* who have to marry wives for reasons of policy, has 'gone out of fashion' I was told by Arab acquaintances). One wife was old and one was young, and boredom sat on both their faces. The harem looked entirely inward on to a richly over-decorated court. It was in the centre of Fez. There was no garden; there were no windows; there were no visitors; the wives never went out. Perhaps once a year they were allowed to pay a visit to some famous shrine. Penned up in their gaudy prison they spend their time eating too much, quarrelling, making up their faces and trying on their costumes, having children, and doing nothing. I've never seen a place where boredom was so evidently rife. I escaped from it with delight, thanking heaven not to have been born an Arab. The negro slaves were the only cheerful note; able to go out shopping and meet their friends, they laughed and chattered happily enough.

I was reminded of a remark the Caid of Mogador made to an English visitor. He had been perfectly amazed to find that this Englishman lived happily with his wife. It was evidently something outside his experience and he observed them wistfully. Finally he said, 'You have one wife and you are happy. I have a hundred and I have never known a happy hour except away from home!'

It was probably some such first-hand observation which made the Sheriff of Ouazzan nearly sixty years ago divorce all his wives and go looking for an English wife. He found a suitable young girl with courage enough to embark on this rather difficult career, and they lived happily together until his death, she being much loved by his family and his

tribe. She says, significantly, 'After a time he became quite cheerful and even began to talk.'

In pursuit of my investigations into the happiness of harem life I thought that I ought to visit the Sultan of Ouzzourzat. This remarkable man, the most married man of our time, at any rate, marries a wife *every day*. 'Even on fast days?' we asked, rather shocked. 'Yes,' replied our informant firmly, 'even during Ramadan.' So we set out for Ouzzourzat.

The castle, or Kashba, of this remarkable man is in the wildest, remotest part of the Middle Atlas—only within the last few years have the French opened up that part of the country and it is still hardly safe for the traveller. However, we were going with an unusual man, M. Emil Dubois, a Belgian former soldier who came to Marrakesh to heal his lungs, injured by gas, settled down there, speaks Arabic and the Berber dialect Chleuh, and acts as chauffeur and guide to travellers who want really out-of-the-way experiences, adventurous without being actually dangerous. In his hands we thought we would be safe enough even in the castle of Ouzzourzat. So we set off. The Atlas mountains are wonderfully grand. The giant cedars loom incredibly vast against the sky, huge ilex trees larger than any we had ever seen before hung on the steep slopes. The Berber tribesmen with their flocks of brown sheep came out of their little black felt tents and saluted us. They do not like the French, their conquerors, but are friendly enough to other foreigners. The Berbers are a splendid-looking race, very tall and straight with frank, open faces, fair-skinned and often blue-eyed. They have resisted every effort to civilise them. The Romans failed, the Arabs failed. The French, I hope, will fail. For there is something splendid about the simplicity and the unchanging quality of their

existence. Their stoic acceptance of rain and wind, of cold and heat, their indifference to luxury and even to comfort, their entire belief in one God who has ordained the universe as it is, so that heat, cold, wind, rain are his will, and so should be equally acceptable to his creatures, has something truly grand and truly poetic about it. Something that made Nietzsche call them 'the noblest race of men.' No harems here. The women, strong and active, generally with one baby tied to their backs and another toddler clinging to their gowns, looked out at us with no concealing veil, as frank and fearless as the men.

It was afternoon when we came at last to the castle of Ouzזורzat. It loomed before us huge and strange. It might have been a castle designed by a Martian architect for a War Lord of Mars. It certainly did not look as if anyone of our world would ever have thought of it. However, there it was. It appeared to be all too solid and real, though great clouds were gathering like more distant and even more fantastic castles ranged behind it.

With some inner doubts, on my part at least, we knocked at the gate. After a time a retainer opened it. We asked if the Sultan was at home. 'No,' replied the retainer, 'he has just gone to his palace in Marrakesh because the Sultan is coming.' Disappointed, but perhaps a little relieved, we went on our way. For the castle looked odder and odder the longer we looked at it. And we thought even the wild mountains in the gathering night friendlier and safer looking than the ominous Kashba of Ouzזורzat.

On our first arrival we approached Marrakesh, the capital of Southern Morocco, in the early morning. The Middle Atlas had grown lower and lower as we drove along and turned at last into a dusty plain. But far away we could see the magnificent range of the Great Atlas, white with

eternal snow. Strings of camels began to pass us. They surprised me by being so beautiful in motion. The dusty yellow beasts that look so lumpy and awkward at rest move with the grace of sailing ships before a breeze; their long necks, always carried before them at just the same height, seem to be floating upon water as their smooth effortless stride carries them away across the distant horizon. As we drew near Marrakesh groves of date palms appeared everywhere. The day was hot and bright, and the people we met had a more negroid and more genial look than the pinched fanatic faces common at Fez. We were in the Middle Ages still, but this was the Middle Ages of Haroun al-Raschid, Calif of Baghdad. This was the vast oriental city, with its huge red walls stretching away farther than the eye could reach where strange adventures would lie in wait for one—where life would become infinitely complicated and dangerous if you walked that ‘stone’s throw out on either hand from the well-ordered world we know.’ And we found that even the French are oddly affected by the atmosphere of magic and sorcery. A common advertisement in French Moroccan newspapers is ‘Madame ——— tells the Future. Good at *removing enchantments*.’ And old French inhabitants are apt, when they are ill, to call in the sorcerer instead of the doctor. I should not myself call in the Berber doctors whom I saw sitting with their wares in the great square at Fez among the Berber dancers, the snake-charmers and sellers of love philtres and fertility charms. They are wild, bearded men—squatting among their wolves’ heads and panther skins, with powdered bones and weird dry herbs spread upon the ground for sale. But the drugs must be accompanied by charms and invocations, for though Allah alone is merciful and is all-powerful, the Berbers have a Pagan pantheon of their own as well, and the Arabs have

a thousand saints to intercede for them. I was, however, charmed by the snake-charmer against attacks by snakes, though I was not tempted to try the efficacy of his invocations by playing with his large black-hooded cobras and squat, deadly-looking vipers among which he danced barefooted to the monotonous squealing and thumping of a pipe and drum.

We were singularly fortunate in that our visit to Marrakesh coincided with the yearly visit of the Sultan. As we approached its great red walls for the first time we rubbed our eyes. The plain was full of magnificent horses caparisoned in blue, or green, or crimson embroidered with gold, being led about by retainers or standing in groups snuffing at the dry grass. There were pavilions on the plain and fires at which mutton was roasting. It might have been a Council of Saladin and his knights, but it was really a gathering of the Berber chiefs from the Atlas come to welcome the Sultan outside the city.

They meet him on the plain, and when he receives the traditional bread and salt have a 'fantasia,' dashing about on their horses, firing off their long-stocked rifles and throwing them in the air.

We also saw the Sultan's visit to the Mosque, riding on a magnificent grey Arabian stallion and preceded by six other stallions of equal beauty led unsaddled ahead of him. A huge green umbrella was held above him as he rode dressed in robes of the finest, whitest wool. Two pretty little sons of his Marrakesh consort came after him in a pony carriage drawn by four tiny Shetland ponies and oddly accompanied by a French governess with blondined hair. And he was guarded by his private bodyguard which might well have attended Haroun al-Raschid—superb Senegalese troops, clad for the visit to the Mosque in pure white linen

with full pleated trousers, but generally wearing scarlet, with fantastic round head-dresses rather like the Red Queen's crown.

After Marrakesh almost anything would seem an anti-climax. But really, though Marrakesh is stranger than anything I ever saw or imagined, I left it with some relief; there was something rather alarming about such strangeness. And we had still to cross the great Atlas, where we slept in the pass of Tizintest, at a height of eight thousand feet, and watched the dawn break over the desert far away. There the German ex-legionary who kept the mountain inn offered us panther shooting if we would stay another day, or ostrich shooting in the desert if we spent the week-end.

All through the Atlas we had seen tremendous castles. I asked the approximate date of one particularly grand one. 'Oh,' said M. Dubois, who was still our guide, 'I can tell you the exact date of that one. It was begun in 1907, but, as you see, it was never quite finished—that's because the French came and modern artillery made it out of date.'

Then as we went farther and farther south we began to see the Argand trees, a strange tree which grows nowhere else in the world, and which has an oil-yielding berry—it is a little like the olive but more gnarled and dragon-like.

We went to Agadir, to Mogador, to Casablanca and to Rabat. Still the strangest and the most individual of all the cities we visited were Fez and Marrakesh. But I think I have said enough already to show that you can visit the Middle Ages, and that such a visit is not only a delightful holiday but something to remember with interest and pleasure all your life.

*'RIDE ON, LITTLE SISTER!'*

BY CLARE SILVA-WHITE.

'AND who have you got for me to-day?' asked Dr. Terence O'Flaherty, after he had hung up his wet overcoat and finished discussing the weather.

'There is Mrs. Hogan,' said the Mother Superior slowly. 'She is complaining a great deal this morning of that bad leg of hers. Then old Mr. Armstrong got out of bed last night as soon as Sister had gone out of the ward, and as a result his temperature is up this morning to 103. Mrs. Lindsay's cough is much worse. She can hardly get her breath sometimes. I think you had better see her. And, of course, Sister Augustine, I fear she is failing fast.'

'Sister Augustine?'

'Yes, do you not remember she was transferred here from our Birmingham house about nine months ago? She was taken ill soon after she arrived, but you were away on your holidays and Dr. O'Connor attended her. She has never been really well since. Years ago, you know, she spent a long time in South America, and I think the hot climate must have been too much for her. Her strength has been failing her now for some time, and last week she was compelled to keep her bed. She has grown very weak, and wanders a great deal.'

'Is that the small Sister I have met once or twice in the corridors?' asked the Doctor.

And as he spoke he seemed to see her there in the little reception room. A tiny, frail creature, her eyes dark beneath her white wimple. Once, twice he had passed her as he went on his rounds.

‘Yes, she is very small, hardly bigger than a child. Come, I will take you to see her first.’

And the Mother Superior, her voluminous habit making a gentle murmur against the matting, led the Doctor down the long corridor and up the stairs into the little ward which was set aside for the sick and infirm among the Sisters. There was only one bed occupied, and as they approached it, the Sister who was kneeling at one side, busy with her beads, rose to her feet.

‘How is she, Sister?’

‘Just the same, Reverend Mother. Her poor mind wanders all the time.’

The Doctor bent down, but his first brief glance showed him that here was a patient who need not be disturbed. He straightened himself, and looking significantly across at the Mother Superior, he said :

‘We won’t bother her just now, I think. I will look in again when I have finished my round.’

The Mother Superior gave a little sigh. Then she turned to the Sister.

‘You will stay here, Sister. The Doctor and I will be returning in a little while.’

Sister Teresa fell on her knees once more at the bedside as the Doctor and the Mother Superior went softly out of the ward.

They walked cautiously so that they might not disturb the rest of her who lay in the little bed. For the same reason the Sister repeated her office in a low, almost inaudible whisper. None of them need have troubled, for had they only known it, Sister Augustine was thousands of miles away from them all, and soon she would be setting out on a longer journey still. . . .

. . . It was in the year 1899 that she left her native



country, France, to help establish a branch of the Order of the Little Sisters of the Poor, in South America. She didn't go alone, of course. There were nine other Sisters with her, but she was the youngest of them all. And so tiny, that at first the Mother-General, who was the guiding force that had sent them out, demurred a little at letting her go. But so earnestly did she plead, so certain was she that her health was well able to stand the strain, that in the end that kindest of women gave way. She allowed Augustine to take her place with the rest.

But to big Sister Vincent, she said :

'Take special care of the little Sister. Otherwise you might lose her. For look you, have you ever seen anyone so tiny ?'

Then they all laughed, but little Sister Augustine did not mind. She was quite content, for she had got her way. She was going out with the other Sisters to start the work in far-away South America. Sometimes as she knelt in chapel, those last few days before they set sail, she wondered a little about this new country to which they were going. There would be strange flowers, strange birds, strange beasts. Sister Augustine, who was of a timid disposition, hoped that these last would keep the new arrivals at a respectful distance. For even the angry bark of an old farmhouse dog was enough to make her heart flutter beneath the heavy black habit.

But soon afterwards they were travelling to Bordeaux to take the ship for Barranquilla, and then she forgot all about wild animals, for she was sick almost all through the voyage. It was only on the last three days that she had sufficiently recovered to be able to pace the deck for a little while, leaning on Sister Vincent's strong arm. For Sister Vincent, that lucky one, had not known what it meant even to be

sick for one day. And that was a good thing for Sister Augustine, for she nursed her night and day, and was almost as delighted as she was, when at last the time came that she could leave the hot little cabin, and stagger upstairs to seek the benefits of a little fresh air. Not that there was too much of that, for it was stiflingly hot. Still it was a change after the cabin, and as she lay in a low deck-chair listening to Sister Vincent's cheerful voice, life began to take on some of its old brightness once more.

By the time they reached Barranquilla she was almost her old self again. They rested there for two or three days, but Sister Vincent, who was in charge of the party, would not allow them to remain any longer. Indeed, they were all anxious to reach their destination. The journey on the Magdalena river up to Honda took them fifteen days, and although Sister Augustine suffered no more from sea-sickness, she told herself many times that she hoped it would be a long while before she would have to enter a boat again.

Think of it ! After that long sea voyage to be more than three weeks in a boat, and often the water so shallow that their craft sank into the sands, and they had to be transferred to another vessel.

But oh the beauty of the country through which they passed ! The birds with their marvellous plumage, the wonderful deep dark green of the forests that reached right down to the water's edge, the strange, tropical flowers.

Once as they drifted close to land, Sister Augustine saw a slender shape curved round the bough of a tree that overhung the water. She called Sister Vincent, and the two of them watched it for a moment in silence. Then Sister Vincent clapped those big, brown hands of hers, and immediately it sprang up, so that for a moment they saw all the

gracile beauty of its black and golden body, before it dropped into the thick undergrowth and was lost to view.

But supposing, just supposing, they had been nearer, thought Sister Augustine, clutching her companion's arm for a moment at the mere thought of it.

Nothing seemed to frighten Sister Vincent, yet even she seemed thankful when at last that long voyage came to an end.

They reached Honda to find the President of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, with two of the members, waiting to receive them. They had brought with them ten mules for the use of the Sisters and three horses for themselves.

Oh, and then the heart of little Sister Augustine sank right down into those tiny boots of hers. For be sure that never in all her twenty-six years had she even a nodding acquaintance with horse-flesh, let alone with mules. And now she must mount this fiery beast that the kind-eyed gentleman was holding for her. Must somehow, when safely mounted, contrive to arrange her heavy skirts with becoming decorum. See, Sister Vincent, just ahead of her, had managed it to perfection. She was leaning back in her saddle like a queen on her throne. Nothing daunted Sister Vincent—neither sea voyages, nor jaguars, nor even mules.

At first it wasn't so dreadful after all. It was straight country and the mules ambled along soberly enough. Sliding her little fingers underneath the big broad saddle Sister Augustine could feel the animal's warm back against her bare flesh.

But presently the road changed. The ground was now steep and sloping, strewn with boulders of a great size, so that to negotiate them successfully, the mules were obliged to stand on their hind legs.

Only the special grace of God and the sweet protection

of His Most Blessed Mother kept the Little Sisters from sliding sheer off the animals' backs on to the rocky road. They clung to saddle and bridle with all their strength, praying that the end of this most special trial might come soon. But there was to be no end to it yet awhile, and it was not long before even Sister Vincent's broad brown face took on an unearthly white hue, and as for little Sister Augustine, well, the marvel was that she had not collapsed of sheer fright and fatigue long ago.

Sister Vincent recovered herself first, of course. She rode among the other Sisters on her big grey mule.

'See, my Sisters, what a good horsewoman I have become! Sister Aloysius, do not hang so tightly on to his mouth or you will pull the poor beast over on top of you. And you, Sister Genevieve, sit further back in your saddle.'

But to little Sister Augustine all she said was :

'Ride on, little Sister, ride on! For the honour of France and of Our Lady!'

And the little Sister did her best to obey her, to keep up with the rest, but, dear God, it was terrible! They went down hills where their mules were obliged to jump from one rock to another. Indeed, it was hard to say which was the worst, the going down a hill, or the coming up, for in each the animal was bent forward vertically, so that had she not leaned backward as far as possible, she might have fallen on his head. Oh, those rocks, those steep hills! For months afterwards she was to go over them again and again at night, to wake up with that strong voice crying in her ears :

'Ride on, little Sister, ride on! For the honour of France and of Our Lady!'

But even the worst things come to an end, and at last came a day when that ride could safely be numbered among

the things of the past. With thankful hearts they said good-bye to their mules, and soon they were in a train on their way to Bogota.

There the ladies and gentlemen of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul awaited them at the station. What greetings, what a welcome !

'Had you too bad a journey ? Was it very terrible ?'

'Oh no, no, it was nothing, just nothing at all.'

And indeed, thought Sister Augustine, standing there on the platform, with not a mule in sight, and the ground firm beneath her feet, it was almost as though a sponge had been passed over a slate, erasing the memory of that ride from their minds. It was not until one went to bed at night that it all came back again.

They were taken to a waiting carriage, sinking gratefully on the broad cushioned seats. The carriage moved out into the streets, and presently, to the amazement of all who were not in the secret, it drew up outside a beautiful church. The doors were flung open, and they could see the High Altar all aglitter with lights, as though for some great festival. They heard the jubilant swell of the organ, and to that music the little band of Sisters, those heroic travellers, suffered themselves to be led up the aisle to the seats awaiting them in the sanctuary.

But those tears, which not even the events of that journey had drawn forth, were falling now fast and free, as with trembling voices they joined in the *Te Deum*, and gazed with hungry eyes at the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the High Altar.

And after that there was but the last little journey to the house which was to be the first home of the Little Sisters of the Poor in South America. It was all beautiful—and fancy, there were even some poor old men and women

already gathered there to welcome them, and to make the picture complete !

And presently the Archbishop himself came to say Mass and to confide the Most Blessed Sacrament to the care of the little community of faithful women, that like that other little band of women two thousand years ago, who watched beside a Cross, had endured until the end.

Sister Augustine stayed at the home in Bogota for many years. She, the little frail one, actually outlived big Sister Vincent, who succumbed some five years after their arrival there to the dreadful yellow fever which had already carried off the Mother Provincial and another of the Sisters.

After Sister Vincent died, the little Sister felt very lonely. The old pet name had fallen into disuse. To the rest of the community, fond as they all were of her, she was Sister Augustine.

Often she would go down to the tiny cemetery where the Sisters were buried, and kneeling at the graveside of that one most dear, she would try to imagine that she heard her big voice calling :

‘ Ride on, little Sister, ride on ! For the honour of France and of Our Lady ! ’

How long those days seemed ! Why, it was almost as though that terrible ride had never happened, had just been a figment of one’s own romantic imagination. But, of course, that was nonsense. For was it not chronicled in the very books of the Order—that ride of the ten Little Sisters over the mountain passes ?

At last her health became so bad that they insisted on sending her back to France. Once there, in her native land, she seemed to improve. Quite soon she was well enough to be transferred to the house of the Order in Birmingham. But after she had been there for three or four years, her

health failed again, and on the advice of the doctor she was sent to one of the houses in Ireland, in the hope that the softer, milder climate might do her good.

That was nine months ago, and she had been growing gradually feebler as the weeks slipped by. For a while, of course, she had been strong enough to go about more or less as usual, and perform her duties with the rest. But at last a morning came when she tried to lift her head from the pillow when the first bell rang in the hour of dawn, and found it was impossible.

And since then, why, she had just lain there in her little bed, content to let her frail bark rock placidly to and fro on a quiet sea. Still within sight and sound of shore, that bark would soon set forth on a longer journey even than the voyage to far-away South America.

'She is going fast,' said Dr. Terence O'Flaherty as, having finished his round, he came back to the bedside of Sister Augustine.

The Mother Superior fell on her knees, and the beads of rosary brushed lightly against one of Sister Augustine's little hands, as they pulled restlessly at the white coverlet.

'How cold she is,' the Doctor muttered, as he took the tiny wrist in his big warm grasp.

Through that thick haze that had come between herself and the outside world, she heard him, and he saw the tiny, fugitive ghost of a smile twitch at her sunken mouth.

'How cold!'

Ridiculous, when the sun was blazing overhead in merciless strength. When her heavy serge garments clung around her limbs, and the warm hide of a big brown mule sweltered beneath her hand.

Why, there was Sister Vincent riding just ahead of her, and every bit as hot as she was! She could see the big

drops of perspiration beading her cheeks, falling down on her dusty, travel-stained habit, as she turned in her saddle.

Hear the beloved sound of her strong, cheerful voice, as once again, and for the last time, she urged her forward.

‘ Ride on, little Sister, ride on ! Our journey is almost at an end now.’

There was a little movement in the bed, as of one who, after a long day’s work, at length settles down to peaceful slumber.

The Doctor laid back the cold hand on the coverlet.

‘ Her journey is finished,’ he said.

### A FAREWELL.

*Summer is passing hence, as all must pass.  
She was a queen, and has a golden pall.  
A little, lonely wind sighs through the grass,  
The first dead leaves like mourners’ footsteps fall  
Along the quiet ways, the woods and lanes  
Where every bud and blossom made her dear ;  
Of all her wealth of flowers none remains  
—Or just a sad sweet few whose end is near.  
The silent, waiting multitude of trees,  
Which waved and sang her crowning, watch the end :  
Summer, their queen is gone, the colder breeze  
Is like her dying breath : a ‘ Farewell, friend ! ’  
The old wood crowns the wistful Autumn queen  
In dying gold, where once was living green.*

C. M. MALLET.



## THE BIRTH OF A COLONY.

BY LAURA LUCIE NORSWORTHY.

‘ A PLAN has been formed, by my direction, for transporting a number of convicts in order to remove the inconvenience which arose from the crowded state of the gaols in different parts of the kingdom ; and you will, I doubt not, take such further measures as may be necessary for the purpose.’

In these casual words King George the Third, in his opening speech to Parliament on January 3rd, 1787, made the first public and official allusion to the coming birth of New South Wales, the first of the great Australian Colonies.

It had been for many years the policy of Great Britain to transport felons to America. This served the treble purpose of avoiding the building of innumerable prisons in the United Kingdom to accommodate the large number of convicts—of ridding the mother country of the undesirable part of her population—and at the same time of increasing the supply of inhabitants in a large, sparsely peopled continent.

The Declaration of Independence of America in 1776 and the Treaty of Versailles in 1783 put an end to this system of transportation so far as the United States were concerned, though a few convict ships did actually find their way there as late as 1788-9. The result was that the prisons of Great Britain were soon full to overflowing—for it was a time when even the destruction of a tree, plant, or shrub in a garden was a capital offence, and life sentences were meted out to poachers, pickpockets and petty thieves in as wholesale a way as to persons convicted of the gravest crimes. If,

therefore, the country was not to be built over with gaols—no one thought then of altering the law—a new scheme of transportation obviously had to be found.

The Gold Coast of Africa was tried, but the climate and conditions were such that it had to be abandoned in 1785.

Meantime, Captain Cook had visited the East Coast of Australia in 1770 and 1777, and had taken possession of that vast tract of land on behalf of the British Government. From Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania) to the Gulf of Carpentaria it had been named New South Wales, and the possibility of utilising this territory—or part of it—as a penal settlement was being slowly weighed.

The discovery of the Australian Continent has been claimed by divers nations—Dutch, Portuguese, French, English and Chinese—each perhaps with equal right, for the isolated bays, capes and stretches of land found and named by mariners of different nationalities formed but a small part of that great territory. No one nation discovered the whole.

The names of these first explorers are lost in antiquity. So also are their descriptions of its geography; but as late as 1542 it was believed to be an immense island lying below the island of Java. There is a map of it showing the upper coast only, and this is incorrectly drawn. Another map of about the same period—1550—shows the country as a great tract of land running round the South Pole.

By the time Captain Cook found his way there, more than two hundred years later, though the geography of New Holland—as it was then called—was still incompletely known, it had been sufficiently well charted by the French for him to follow their maps. He himself says :

‘The charts with which I compared such parts of this coast as I visited, are bound up with a French work entitled

*Histoire des Navigations aux Terres Australes*, which was published in 1756, and I found them tolerably correct.'

He was accompanied on his voyage of exploration in 1770 by one Joseph Banks, a naturalist, who was destined to become the central figure in the planning of the new colony. Joseph Banks had roused the interest of Dr. Johnson, and after his return to England a convivial meeting took place between them. Dr. Johnson immediately followed it up by a letter :

'To Joseph Banks, Esq.,  
Johnson's Court,  
Fleet Street.

'February 27th, 1772.

SIR,

'Perpetua ambita bis terra præmia lactis  
Haec habet altrici Capra secunda Jovis.

'I return thanks to you and to Dr. Solander for the pleasure which I received in yesterday's conversation. I could not recollect a motto for your goat, but have given her one. You, Sir, may perhaps have an epic poem from some happier pen than, Sir, your most humble servant  
'SAM : JOHNSON.'

So much was the great dictionary writer impressed by the adventure that when Captain Cook sailed again in 1777, Boswell tells us that Dr. Johnson actually had thoughts of accompanying him.

'Had not you some desire to go upon this expedition, sir?' Boswell asked Dr. Johnson.

'Why, yes,' was the reply, 'but I soon laid it aside. Sir, there is very little of intellectual in the course. Besides, I see but at a little distance. So it was not worth my while to go to see birds fly, which I should not have seen fly; and fishes swim, which I should not have seen swim.'

Whereby we may know the impression created by the

Australian Continent in its virgin state on the mind of an eighteenth-century intellectual.

The fruits of the two expeditions of 1770 and 1777 did not begin to ripen until 1779. In that year a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to enquire into the state of the gaols and the question of transportation of the felons. This Committee called on Joseph Banks to lay before it the possibilities of the land visited by Captain Cook and himself nine years earlier.

Joseph Banks had sailed round the globe as a young man, and he had accompanied the expedition of 1770 as a naturalist, so it was presumed that with this experience he had had opportunities of forming a useful opinion regarding the new country's prospects of sustaining a growing population. To Joseph Banks, therefore, Parliament turned for information and advice. Indeed, he soon became the greatest authority on the subject, which materialised into such an absorbing interest that the founding of the new colony developed into his life's ambition. He worked indefatigably to arouse a corresponding interest in the apathetic officials who comprised the personnel of the Secretary of State; and without shadow of doubt to Joseph Banks is due the foresight, enthusiasm and encouragement which persuaded the British Government to equip and despatch the first transports to Botany Bay.

These transports sailed on May 13th, 1787, under Commodore Arthur Phillip, R.N., the first Governor of New South Wales. They consisted of the frigate *Sirius*, commanded by Captain John Hunter, R.N. (and carrying the Governor)—an armed tender, the *Supply*, in charge of Lieutenant Ball, R.N.—3 store ships—and 6 transports. There was a guard of 1 Major Commandant, 3 Captains of Marines, 12 Subalterns, 24 Non-Commissioned Officers,

168 Privates, 40 Women—wives of the Marines—and their children.

There were 756 convicts (564 men and 192 women) divided between the six transports.

In spite of the efforts of Joseph Banks the Government Department which had the matter in hand under Lord Sydney, Secretary of State, and Sir Evan Nepean, Under-Secretary, was sadly lacking in forethought and even in efficient organisation. The result was that the transports were sent away to people a little known and far distant territory with insufficient stores, implements, clothing, or the bare necessities of daily existence. There were, for instance, no needles and thread of any description, and the marines were sent to sea with neither musket balls nor material with which to make them. There were no armourers' tools or surgeons' instruments.

Captain Phillip had nothing to do with this part of the scheme. He was too busily employed elsewhere. But he wrote innumerable letters to the Department urging the necessity for adequate supplies, and it was not his fault that the expedition—under orders to sail—eventually started without them.

Its departure was wrapt in the same apathy that had shrouded its preparation. Not the faintest public interest was even remotely aroused; and the founders of the new colony which, in the course of little more than half a century, was to become one of the greatest countries of the world, left the shores of England for their unknown destination without even the encouragement of the Government that had despatched them.

The expedition was accompanied down the Channel by the *Hyæna*, of His Majesty's Navy, which then returned to Plymouth, and the little fleet of ships proceeded on its

voyage alone. By the *Hyæna* Captain Phillip sent back his first despatch. Here it is :

‘ As we are now nearly one hundred leagues clear of the Channel the *Hyæna* leaves us this evening to return to Plymouth, but the sea runs too high to send on board the different transports to get any particular account of the state of the convicts. I have, therefore, only to repeat what I said in my last from the Motherbank, that a great part of the women’s cloathing was not come down from London when we sailed, nor did I receive the letters from the Vice King. The Provost Marshall, who had not been seen for a considerable time before we sailed, is left behind, and as it will be very necessary to have such an officer on the spot, I have ordered Mr. Henry Brewer to act as such, and shall be glad if he is approved of.

‘ I enclose a copy of the last returns, and shall send you a more particular account from Teneriffe. At present our motion is such that I find it very difficult to sit at table, but the weather is good, and tho’ the *Charlotte* and *Lady Penrhyn* sail very badly, the clearing the Channel is one great point gained.’

. . . ‘ Since I sealed my letters I have received a report from the officers on board the *Scarborough* respecting the convicts, who, it is said, have formed a scheme for taking possession of the ship. I have ordered the ringleaders on board the *Sirius*, and should not mention the affair at this moment, as I have no time to enter into particulars, but that I suppose it will be mentioned in letters from the ship. I did intend to write to Lord Sydney, but it is late, and I wish the boats on board the different ships. You may assure his lordship of my respects, and tell him the reason that prevents my writing to him.’

Two of the ringleaders of this mutiny were flogged and then removed to another ship. This seems to have had a salutary effect, for the convicts attempted no further insubordination during the remainder of the voyage.

To develop a new and virgin country they had been most unsuitably chosen—indeed, not chosen at all. The idea paramount in the minds of the Governors of the various gaols from which they had come seemed to have been to get rid of the most troublesome among the occupants, and a curious selection of persons was the result. They consisted of gentlemen's servants and even gentlemen themselves, hair-dressers, hackney coachmen, chairmen, silk-weavers, calico-printers, watch-makers, lapidaries and merchants' clerks, besides aged criminals, decrepit or diseased, utterly useless for the purpose in hand, and who were a handicap all round.

Of the sort of people necessary for such a venture—farmers, farm-labourers, builders, tree-fellers, masons and carpenters—there were none. There was nobody who knew anything about botany, mineralogy and natural science. No schoolmasters or teachers. Respectable persons who could have acted as overseers of the men and matrons for the women were conspicuous by their absence. These officers had to be chosen from among the felons themselves.

The wants of the religious had been almost equally neglected. Two Roman Catholic priests had addressed a petition to Lord Sydney offering their services, but, so far as is known, he never even answered it. The only clergyman who accompanied the expedition was a Methodist chaplain—the Reverend Richard Johnson. It was evident, therefore, that the first Governor of New South Wales had an Herculean task before him.

The little fleet called in at Teneriffe, Rio de Janeiro and the Cape of Good Hope, and at these ports Governor Phillip remedied, as far as he could, the shortage of necessities. At the Cape he took on board plants, grain and seeds for growing in the new country, and a few domestic animals for breeding. These were : 1 Stallion, 3 Mares, 3 Colts,

2 Bulls, 6 Cows, 44 Sheep, 28 Hogs. In addition the Governor and the Officers of Marines purchased a few head of stock on their own account.

So far they had sailed seas that had been the highway of marine traffic for centuries, and were there but a little group of ships among other ships ; but when at last they appeared upon the horizon of the South Pacific Ocean they were alone on a vast and unused tract of water, the isolated pioneers of a great and perilous adventure. Nevertheless—favoured by wind and weather—the voyage was accomplished in safety, and took actually no longer than thirty-six weeks, all the ships having the good fortune to be able to keep together. In January, 1788, they anchored in Botany Bay—the spot chosen for them by Joseph Banks—but the locality was found unsuitable for settlement, and they were obliged to leave it. They moved at once to Port Jackson, where, at the head of Sydney Cove, the birth of the first of the Australian colonies took place, on January 26th, 1788. Governor Phillip nursed the frail infant which, from the hardships, privations, and even starvation that beset it, was like to die, and shared all its surrounding risks. He was a great man. One of the greatest at his job that there has ever been.

By September, 1789, his pioncering was so far advanced that a special Regiment had been raised in England for service in New South Wales. It was called the New South Wales Corps, and was sent to replace the detachment of Marines which had gone to Australia with the first transports. Its status in the British Army was exactly the same as though it had been formed for general instead of special use. The Secretary at War thus described it :

‘ With regard to the rank of the New South Wales Corps, it being the youngest in the Army must, of course, when



drawn up, either with other entire Corps or with detachments from them, take part on the left. But with regard to the Officers in all Corps, without distinction, the militia excepted, they naturally take part in all duties, according to seniority in their respective ranks.'

The new Corps was not destined to add to the lustre of the British Army. It became, in fact, a blot on the escutcheon. When at its maximum strength it consisted of ten companies, numbering 886 non-commissioned officers and privates, all drawn from the old military prison of the Savoy—from convicts emancipated on purpose to serve as soldiers—and from convicts who had served their time. There were also ordinary recruits and men from the Marines, who had taken their discharge in preference to returning to England with the detachment.

This was a formidable selection of men to serve in the sole Corps attached to a penal settlement so far from civilisation, and the menace it contained was very soon felt. The resulting insubordination was the more serious because of the absence of all Civil Law in dealing with the convicts. A Judge Advocate had been ordered by the Home Government to preside over the Courts of Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction, and these Courts had received instructions to be administered 'according to the laws of England'; but by an almost incredible oversight no Judge Advocate had been supplied to act in this capacity, nor anyone who could be remotely described as either a Judge or an Advocate; so that a Captain of Marines with no qualifications for a purely judicial position was the only person available to fill the rôle; and as there were no lawyers in the colony the Governor had no legal advice on which he could rely. The result was that martial law prevailed. This worked fairly well while Governor Phillip was in command; but by 1792

the burden of his duties had become intolerable even for him. Nearly five years of overwork, heavy responsibility, self-sacrifice and want under the most appalling conditions had told on his constitution. He found himself obliged to resign his post for reasons of ill-health, and left the colony on December 11th, 1792.

His place was taken—as a temporary measure—first by Major Gose, and then by Captain Paterson, both of the New South Wales Corps. A measure greatly to be deplored, for it placed the Corps in a position which proved highly prejudicial to the colony. It was not until 1795 that a new Governor was sent from England to replace Governor Phillip. This was Captain John Hunter, R.N., who was chosen because he had been Captain of the *Sirius* on that expedition which had brought the first convicts to Australia in 1787, and was, therefore, expected to know something about the conditions.

Captain Hunter found the New South Wales Corps in full possession of the colony and using the power thus attained in the worst possible interests of the convicts. Among other things they had secured the monopoly for the sale of rum, and were supplying it at exaggerated prices to the emancipated felons, thereby enriching themselves at the expense of their more unfortunate compatriots. So strongly had they entrenched themselves in the administration that there was no redress against them ; and so careless were they of principle that justice depended on the size of a bribe ; and if enough was offered even pardons could be bought and sold.

Up to this period free emigrants had not been permitted to enter the colony. But in 1796 the first of these arrived from England, duly conveyed thence at the public expense. On arrival in New South Wales grants of land were assigned

to them, and free rations were allowed from the Government stores over a period of eighteen months.

Governor Hunter received the first of these, and did his best to protect their interests against the monopolies of the New South Wales Corps ; but in spite of his efforts there was, from the first, ill-feeling between the free emigrants and the convict settlers, which grew in intensity as time went on. The Corps, instead of helping him, hindered in every way possible and made matters so much worse that Governor Hunter could do little with any of them. In September, 1800, he embarked for England to report the facts to the British Government. He arrived under unlucky auspices. Do what he would, he could make no impression that promised to remedy the matter and he resigned his post in preference to returning to Australia.

By the time the next Governor—Captain Philip Gidley King, R.N.—took his place, things had reached such a pitch that when he sent home to England a box containing despatches and complaints, it was found on arrival at Downing Street to contain nothing but a parcel of old newspapers—having been rifled by the rebels before leaving Sydney. So much for the respect of the New South Wales Corps for either their Governor or for British authority at home. But even this did not open the eyes of Parliament.

Captain King, with no help behind him from the Government he represented, could do so little to improve the state of things that it has been said the colony ‘ consisted at that time chiefly of those who sold rum and those who drank it ’—whole tracts of land changing hands for kegs of rum and—what in course of time were to become fortunes—thereby made and lost.

Governor King resigned in 1806 for the same reasons as his predecessor ; but before that Joseph Banks—now Sir

Joseph Banks—had been called on to choose the next Governor. It seemed to him that Captain Bligh, R.N., was a suitable candidate. Captain Bligh had accompanied Captain Cook on his voyage of discovery in 1777, and knew the country. Moreover, he had shown himself to be a marvel of pluck and endurance on an astounding voyage across the Pacific Ocean in an open small boat—and he was certainly unsurpassed as a mariner. To him, therefore, Sir Joseph Banks addressed himself in a letter which, fortunately, has been preserved :

*' March 15, 1805.*

*' MY DEAR SIR,—*

*' An opportunity has occurred this day which seems to me to lay open an opportunity of being of service to you and as I hope I never omit any chance of being usefull to a friend whom I esteem as I do you I lose not a minute in apprising you of it.*

*' I have always since the first institution of the new colony at New South Wales taken a deep interest in its success and have been constantly consulted by his Majesty's ministers through all the changes that have been in the department which directs it relative to the more important concerns of the colonists.*

*' At present King the Governor is tired of his station and well he may be so he has carried into effect a reform of great extent which militated much with the interest of the soldiers and settlers there he is consequently disliked and much opposed and has asked leave to return.*

*' In conversation I was asked this day if I knew a man proper to be sent out in his stead one who has integrity unimpeached a mind capable of providing its own resources in difficulties without leaning on others for advice firm in dicipline civil in deportment and not subject to whimper and whine when severity of discipline is wanted to meet (emergencies) I immediately answered as this man must be chosen from among the post captains I know of no one but*

Captain Bligh who will suit but whether it will meet his views is another question.

‘I can therefore if you chuse it place you in the government of the new colony with an income of £2000 a year and with the whole of the Government power and stores at your disposal so that I do not see how it is possible for you to spend £1000 in truth King who is now there receives only £1000 with some deductions and yet lives like a prince and I believe saves money but I could not undertake to recommend anyone unless £2000 clear was given as I think that a man who undertakes so great a trust as the management of an important colony should be certain of living well and laying up a provision for his family.

‘I apprehend that you are about 55 years old if so you have by the tables an expectation of 15 years’ life and in a climate like that which is the best I know a still better expectation but in 15 years £1000 a year will at compound interest of 5 per cent have produced more than £30,000 and in case you should not like to spend your life there you will have a fair claim on your return to a pension of £1000 a year.

‘besides if your family goes out with you as I conclude they would your daughters will have a better chance of marrying suitably there than they can have here for as the colony grows richer every year and something of trade seems to improve I can have no doubt but that in a few years there will be men there very capable of supporting wives in a creditable manner and very desirous of taking them from a respectable and good family.

‘Tell me my dear sir when you have consulted your pillow what you think of this to me I confess it appears a promising place for a man who has entered late into the status of a post captain and the more so as your rank will go on for Phillip the first Governor is now an admiral holding a pension for his services in the country.’

Captain Bligh accepted this kind invitation ; but the plans so ably put before him by his generous friend for

his welfare and that of his daughters failed signally to materialise.

He remained only two years in the colony. He was judicious and humane. He did his best to destroy the monopolies of the New South Wales Corps and ex-convict administrators with whom they were in league. He strove to bridle the traffic in strong drink. He assisted the free emigrants in every way he could.

But the monopolists proved too strong for him. They had by that time enjoyed ten or twelve years of immunity from any authority other than the unprotected rights of an isolated Governor. They had long ago lost any fear they may ever have had of the Government in England. And they had grown reckless in their security from restraint. Disapproving of Governor Bligh's attempts at reform, the New South Wales Corps—with the Colonel and other officers in person—marched to Government House and, securing the Governor as a prisoner, took possession of the reins of power.

Captain Bligh returned to England as soon as he could obtain his release, and added his evidence to that of the other Governors who had preceded him ; but—though it seems incredible—Parliament appears rather to have blamed him than the real offenders. In the delay that followed a certain Colonel Johnston, in command of the New South Wales Corps, had command also of the colony.

After a year of this and of desultory agitation the British Government awoke to a realisation that something must be done. Colonel Johnston was court-martialled and cashiered. The New South Wales Corps was recalled, and on arrival in England absorbed by the British Army, and renamed the 102nd Regiment. Then a regiment from Scotland—the 73rd—was chosen to take its place, and did so in December,

1809. About 500 men from the New South Wales Corps were allowed to transfer to the 73rd and so to remain in Australia. It might have been thought that experience would have prevented such an arrangement, but for reasons which still remain obscure it was nevertheless carried out. With the new regiment went also a new Governor and a new *régime*. The new Governor was Lieutenant-Colonel Lachlan Macquarie—a Scot with a wide experience of handling men. He started his term of office under happier auspices than any of the earlier Governors, and it may not have been merely coincidence that he was the first army officer to hold the post. He had also the distinction of being the only Governor since Captain Phillip to be popular with everyone, in spite of the fact that he kept a tight hand on the remnants of the New South Wales Corps who had joined the 73rd. He was popular even with the convict settlers, so that his term of office—which was from 1809 to 1821—came to be known as ‘the good old days of Governor Macquarie.’ His name is immortalised in one of the principal streets of Sydney, so it is still in every colonial’s mouth.

He was succeeded in 1821 by Sir Thomas Brisbane—after whom the capital of Queensland was named—and with Sir Thomas Brisbane came a great change in the administration.

Land was only granted to emigrants in proportion to their means to give employment and maintenance to specified numbers of convicts. Subsistence to five convicts for a term of years gave the right to 500 acres of land, plus rations for the family and convict servants for a period of six months. In addition a breeding cow was granted to each convict—the cows to be repaid by an equal number of cows after a specified number of years. Means to maintain and employ ten convicts entitled the settler to 1,000 acres of land, rations,

and ten cows. And so on. With the changing conditions came educated and influential settlers—the backbone of the colonists—and convicts eventually became scarce owing to the influx of so many settlers with capital, who employed and maintained them. Whereupon reports began to travel back to the mother country, glorifying Australia in such a way that to the criminal classes in England it appeared a sort of Utopia. This brought a new set of convicts—people who committed crimes with the definite object of being transported. They were frequently followed by their wives and families, who travelled by passenger ship, bringing with them the ill-gotten gains of the husbands who had preceded them. With this ‘capital’ they claimed the malefactors as servants on arrival. Accordingly the convict husbands were assigned to their wives, and lived comfortably on the proceeds of their misdemeanours. There were other abuses. Gentlemen felons with intelligence—if plausible enough—found means of escaping punishment altogether, while the poor and dull-witted went through their entire sentence. Moreover, pardons were granted wholesale, free in every respect except for permission to leave the colony. These were called ‘Conditional pardons.’

Such things happened often enough to cause resentment on the part of the honest, educated settlers, and to give them a strong sense of injustice. They saw little difference made between the reward of their own virtue and the condonement of felony, and before long feeling ran so high between them and the emancipated convicts that relations were almost impossible.

By that time the conditions of transport had improved out of all comparison with the malequipped little fleet that had borne the first convicts to Botany Bay.

Mr. James Mudie in his book, *The Felony of New South*



*Wales*, 1837, describes the arrival of female convicts at that date :

‘ Each convict ship carries a herd of females of all ages, with trunks and boxes stuffed with every kind of female dress and toilet paraphernalia they can come at. In the ship they have unlimited freedom of intercourse among themselves ; the ship’s surgeon is entrusted with their discipline.

‘ There are no respectable women overseers or matrons. And certain of the convicts are appointed as nurses to the sick.

‘ With rich silk dresses, bonnets *à la mode*, ear pendants three inches long, gorgeous shawls and splendid veils, silk stockings, kid gloves, and parasols in hand, dispensing sweet odours from their profusely perfumed forms, they disembark, and are assigned as SERVANTS, and distributed to expectant settlers.

‘ On the very road to their respective places of assignment the women are told of the easy retirement of the FACTORY, and advised to get themselves sent there, where they will be allowed to marry without having to obtain the consent of an assignee master.’

The Factory at Parramatta was then (1836-7) managed by the wife of a sergeant—uneducated and incompetent. She was called the Matron. The Police Magistrates of Parramatta and other Magistrates were a visiting Committee, but she ‘ ran ’ the Factory. She appointed overseers from among the convicts to superintend the other convicts, and to wait on her own family ; but apart from this the female convicts were permitted to remain idle, with the result that they were continually getting into mischief. There were 500 or 600 of them in residence at a time, and it is not surprising under this ‘ discipline ’ that many became the mothers of illegitimate children. All were maintained at the expense of the colonial public, and a weekly report of

their numbers—both of mothers and infants—appeared in the *Sydney Gazette* of the period.

These conditions, however, were only temporary. The constant stream of emigrants pouring into the country was now bringing the flower of British colonisers to show the world what grit and pluck and industry can do to develop a new land.

By 1838 the British population in Australia consisted of 80,000 souls, of whom 20,000 lived in Sydney alone ; and this was but the beginning of the turn of the tide. The transportation of convicts to New South Wales ceased in 1841. Even then the influx of settlers was swamping the felon population, and when the gold discoveries began ten years later—in 1851—the rush of gold seekers swallowed up all that remained of the convicts.

By that time Australia was one of the important countries of the world ; and to-day—only a century and a half from the birth of New South Wales—is no longer a colony but a Commonwealth.

*LITTLE DOG GEORGE.*

BY W. M. LETTS.

FIFTEEN women out of twenty who passed the door of 39 Hamilton Square and saw the little dog George on the step said : ' You adorable little darling.' George despised them for saying it. He looked up through a fringe of hair and his dark eyes glittered with scorn. If they tried to stroke him he growled. Possibly there has never been so closely packed a bundle of independence as this Sealyham terrier. An ' inferiority complex ' was a thing beyond his comprehension. His attitude was Cæsar's—' For always I am George.' To express him in a parable you must suppose Hitler and Mussolini sitting on a bench together in the sun, dividing the world between them ; George, seeing them thus, would surely jump up and make room for himself.

He was over a year old when he came with a master and mistress to the hall flat at No. 39. He adapted himself at once to the new environment. His mistress ran a Beauty Parlour and his master was a solicitor. They were out all day. Until their return George sought and found his own interests. On Saturday afternoon and Sunday he was a devoted and domesticated little dog with no concerns apart from his owners. At first the cook-housekeeper had tried to take George out on a lead when she went shopping. But he found that he disliked this intensely. The people in shops talked in silly voices to him and offered him biscuits that he would not eat, so he made a point of going off by himself before the shopping expedition started. Indeed, he went out before breakfast that he might inspect the dustbins, hunt

some early cats and meet those dogs who were let out for a run. He despised the cocker who sought his favour so eagerly. She seemed to him a flapper of an effusive and tiresome habit. Large dogs he liked, and here indeed lies the one tragedy of George's youth. He fell victim to an overwhelming passion for a lady Alsatian at the far side of the Square. She appeared to the Sealyham the perfect mate, the ideal mother for his pups. He besieged her door until the parlour-maid from the inside of the door attacked him with a broom. That was bad enough, but she and the cook laughed loudly and shrilly as he retreated backwards down the steps. George's pink, black-spotted nose and his ear-flaps grew pinker each time that he passed the house and his stumpy legs scurried to get out of sight.

Among the people who often passed George was Miss Frizelle, the elderly lady who lived at No. 29. She looked at him one day and bent down, holding out her gloved hand for him to smell. She knew his name from the milkman. Everyone seemed to know it. 'Well, George,' she said in her rather deep voice. Then she walked towards the shops. To her surprise he followed her. She showed no elation but continued her business, taking it as a matter of course that he followed her to the Bank and to each shop that she entered. Only as she turned homeward she said: 'Would you like to go round by the canal, George?' He looked up at her through his white fringe and frisked slightly. By a *détour* she reached the elm-shaded bank of the canal. George showed every sign of approval. He bounced, he kicked up absurd little hind toes, he became almost puppyish. The walk was repeated each day. George seemed to wait for her and she, rather than disappoint him, made excuses for shopping and for taking air by the canal.

But Miss Frizelle was bronchial by constitution and in

cold weather she spent her afternoons indoors. Seated near the window she took stock of those who went and came about the Square and she was horrified to see that George had adopted Mr. Todhunter for his afternoon companion.

This same Mr. Todhunter lived at No. 12 on the side of the Square at right angles to George and Miss Frizelle's respective flats. Miss Frizelle knew Mr. Todhunter's name and fame because she disliked him so much. He was a retired schoolmaster, an elderly, irascible man with straggly grey hair and fierce bright eyes that glared through thick-glassed spectacles. His every thought and word jarred upon the old-fashioned gentlewoman who was Eleanor Frizelle. Their contacts were literary, for they had never exchanged a word; they passed without a sign that each knew the other's name. But in the local paper they sparred fiercely. Miss Frizelle was fond of writing witty and forceful objections to all modern movements, to the ways of the young in the gardens of the Square, to the noises of motor-cars, of jazz music and of other people's wireless. And each time that her letter appeared Mr. Todhunter fiercely rushed to the defence of the other side. He labelled himself a modern of the most lawless, syncopated, road-hog variety and he scoffed at Miss Frizelle's philosophy and her die-hard objections. Her letters were signed E. F., but everyone knew the cultivated style, the little recollections of old days, the classical allusions that denoted Miss Frizelle. Mr. Todhunter came into the open and let himself be thought communist, atheist, iconoclast, anything that 'old Frizelle' (as he called her) would most dislike. His own circle (which included the Vicar) enjoyed the enmity. 'That old classic,' 'Mrs. Canute,' 'Noah's aunt' were names that Mr. Todhunter devised for Miss Frizelle. She was content to call him 'that dreadful man.' Her opinion of George's acumen fell when

she saw the little dog go out each afternoon at the heels of the coat-flying, squash-hatted Mr. Todhunter.

As days grew finer it happened at times that Miss Frizelle would pass Mr. Todhunter in the afternoon at a time when George was in attendance. The Sealyham at first seemed anxious to introduce his two friends one to the other. Had he been American he would have said, 'Miss Frizelle—meet Mr. Todhunter.' Being George he wagged for the lady and ran ahead with her, then back he went to the gentleman. But he came to realise that he could not combine them and he gave a slight recognition in passing but remained with the friend who had started out with him. During the autumn Miss Frizelle had to retire to bed with a bad cold. She was told by her maid : 'The shabby old gentleman out of No. 12 is taking George in the mornings now.' But, nevertheless, when she returned to her morning walks George joined her at once.

On such a morning Miss Frizelle had left the canal bank and was approaching the Square when she saw two sights she disliked, Mr. Todhunter coming towards her and a Kerry blue terrier, unaccompanied and unrestrained, on the pavement where George was running. She knew the Sealyham's ways, his self-importance, his arrogance with larger dogs. She had no lead for him, she was powerless.

In a second the battle had started, if battle it could be called where a large Kerry blue rolls and worries a little Sealyham that looks like a baby's woolly toy. Miss Frizelle screamed rather wildly, but Mr. Todhunter grappled in a scientific manner. He seized the large dog by the collar and the tail and dragged him off the prostrate small one.

'Catch George,' he yelled.

Miss Frizelle picked up a muddied, bleeding little dog and held him in spite of his wild struggles and growls of defiance.

Mr. Todhunter sent the terrier sprawling with a well-advised kick.

‘Give me George,’ he shouted. When he had the struggling hero in his arms he said, ‘Come on, we must doctor him, he’s bleeding badly.’

‘The Vet——’ urged Miss Frizelle.

‘Not necessary. We’re close to my house. Put your hand in my left-hand pocket. You’ll find my latch-key. Open the door for me and go in yourself.’

Almost hypnotised by fear for the Sealyham and the commands of her companion, she opened the door of No. 12 and went into the hall.

‘Door on the right—my study,’ Mr. Todhunter ordered.

She opened it and found herself in a room that, in spite of her prejudice, struck pleasantly on her senses. It was obviously a man’s room, filled by a desk and big leather chairs, with book-cases about it. The room smelt of leather and tobacco. There were good prints on the walls, good books on the shelves. Miss Frizelle felt a sort of pleasure that she condemned in herself. The owner of the flat rang the bell and a dour-looking respectable man answered it.

‘I want a jug of boiled water, a bowl and that box of First Aid dressings out of my washstand cupboard—and be quick, Smith.’

Mr. Todhunter turned to his visitor.

‘Now, lay that newspaper on the easy chair and I shall put the patient upon it.’

George was tenderly placed on his back on the chair. He had the conscious stoicism of a dying gladiator. He was bleeding from ugly bites on his throat, chest and jaw. The manservant came in quickly with a tray holding bowl, water and dressings.

‘That’s all,’ grunted the master, and the man retired. To

Miss Frizelle he said : ' Now you keep him quiet while I wash and disinfect these wounds. You're not feeling faint, are you ? '

' Not at all,' snapped out the lady, ' but I'd like to kill that Kerry blue. What right have people to keep dogs like that ? '

' My dear madam, we are, under Providence, a free people. The Kerry blue has his rights as much as a Russian or a German, though probably *you* wouldn't allow either to exist.'

Miss Frizelle would have retorted something, but George gave a pitiful little moan as the hot water and disinfectant reached his wounds. At once the feud was stilled and murmurs of pity and encouragement fell from each.

George feebly licked the drops that reached his nose and he licked the hands that ministered. Presently he lay, cleansed and doctored, feeling in himself all the glory and pathos of the wounded warrior.

As she stood looking at him Miss Frizelle suddenly found that she was faint, that her knees shook under her, that some queer thing had given way and that she was about to faint. To her annoyance—or was it relief?—she felt a strong hand grip her elbow and guide her to a chair.

' Steady ! ' said Mr. Todhunter, ' steady ! It's the shock. I'll doctor *you* now. Keep your head down.'

She heard a cupboard open, a chink, then he said : ' Drink this—it'll put you right.'

Miss Frizelle took a medicine-glass in her hand, swallowed something fiery and choked.

' Gracious ! ' she exclaimed, ' that was strong ! '

' My dear madam, that was rum. It may go to your head, but it'll restore your nerve. Just sit quiet a minute. We'll let George rest a bit.'

' But, Mr. Todhunter, I must go home.'



‘Wait ! You’ll fall if you try to walk. Can’t you sit and be polite for a few minutes ? Here, you and I who fight like two cats in the newspapers have met at last with a chance to know each other. It’s an experience. I regard you as the arch-enemy of progress in this town and you regard me as——’

‘A sort of would-be Bernard Shaw,’ snapped Miss Frizelle.

Mr. Todhunter was seated now at his desk ; he smiled at her behind those thick glasses that magnified his iceberg eyes.

‘Ah ! and yet in real life we like each other. We throw javelins into straw figures, but as man and woman we are really complementary. Had we married in youth we should have embraced two sides of most questions. It’s a pity from the eugenic point of view that we didn’t.’

‘Mr. Todhunter !’

‘I’m being entirely, coldly scientific in considering a hypothetical case,’ he answered reprovingly.

‘It’s an absurd case—please don’t consider it.’

‘You think we should have fought,’ he mused, ‘but you see in our tastes we are at unity. Tastes are more fundamental than opinions. If we’d had a family——’

‘Mr. Todhunter, I have never wished to have a family. I dislike your theories.’

‘We should have at least united over our dogs. A little dog like George would have kept us a loving pair. Tastes are of our essential spirit and dog-lovers the world over are united. I do not say that a love of dogs shows amiability—far from it ; you are not amiable, neither am I. But in being devoted to George we are rapidly becoming fast friends.’

Miss Frizelle laughed hysterically.

'I am going home,' she said ; ' you will get George back safely, I know.'

' You can't go alone,' he retorted ; ' the rum on a probably empty stomach will have made you semi-intoxicated. I shall carry George with one arm and give you the other. Come along !'

Miss Frizelle rose and felt herself tottering. She allowed herself to be guided to the door. Once on the pavement she spoke severely.

' Now, please, I want to walk alone. But kindly walk just behind me in case I feel giddy.'

Solemnly they processed to the door of No. 29. Catching the railing, Miss Frizelle ascended the steps.

' Can you manage your key ? Here, give it to me ; I'll open it,' urged Mr. Todhunter, and she allowed him to help her. She paused at the open door.

' Good-bye, Mr. Todhunter. I know you'll get George home safely now. We'll probably have him out again soon . . . and thank you for your help.'

Mr. Todhunter glared at her through those thick glasses.

' We both love George and we're *nearly* loving each other,' he growled at her. ' Queer ! You of all people—good-bye, my dear.'

Miss Frizelle gasped. She went to her room and from her window watched Mr. Todhunter walking towards No. 39.

' That little dog George . . .' she murmured, ' has robbed me of my one enemy.'

## BY THE WAY.

PAUSING for a moment the other day in front of a second-hand bookshop, I felt my eye attracted to a notice inviting passers to buy *The Mad Crime of the Passionate Paramour*—I refrained, without difficulty, and yet it bespeaks a pretty taste in titles, I cannot but think.

★       ★       ★

Who shall say that chivalry is dead?—The following conversation is at least credibly reputed to the contrary :

‘I must go along and see my doctor,’ said Robinson to Smith ; ‘I don’t like the look of my wife at all.’

‘Hold hard a minute while I get my hat and I’ll come with you,’ answered Smith : ‘I hate the sight of mine !’

★       ★       ★

I quoted my youngest’s prayer last month : in rivalry, an old friend tells me that his small granddaughter recently explained to him that she had successfully tested the efficacy of prayer. She put up a petition to her Maker that He might enable her to pass her swimming test. ‘It took Him a fortnight,’ she ended, ‘but He did it !’

Not content with that narration, my friend further supplied me with the following—an exact copy, he averred, of an epistle of the said granddaughter to him :

DEAR BON—

I RERLY do HATE this BLASTED school. I wunder wat Mummy wode have sade if she went 75 miles an hour.

Thank you for the anemals and letter. It IS trooe wat I sead about shooll.

Love from URSULA.

Tactfully I forbode to ask for the name of Ursula's school (or shooll).

\* \* \*

Except for a few odd matches, and the old Goose-match at Harrow, cricket is over, and the days are at hand when all the battles will be by the fireside as the games are refought by devotees. There is one book which should be handy, to correct or to amplify memory of all the long record before this just-closed season, namely, the new edition of H. S. Altham's *The History of Cricket* (Allen and Unwin, 8s. 6d. n.) which has been revised and also brought up to 1938 by E. W. Swanton. Sir Pelham Warner concludes his brief Introduction by describing Mr. Altham as 'the Churchill of Cricket': what this means is not clear. What Sir Pelham meant it to mean presumably is that 'no further historians need apply': and yet the additions, six chapters on cricket since the War, are all the work of Mr. Swanton, and worthy of their place. In one cricketer's heart this book cannot take the place of the book of books, Ranjitsinghi's *Jubilee Book of Cricket*, but it is certainly indispensable to the lover of the greatest of games. One small error—the index suggests that the 'googly' began with D. W. Carr, yet the correct attribution is given in the text on p. 248, though little indeed is said about it. But no book can say everything, and he will be a glutton who demands more than he has received. I specially commend it to uncles (and others) for use at Christmastime—or before.

\* \* \*

Among the moderns autobiography is a form of litera-

ture more popular in the writing even than it was of yore, and it must be admitted that autobiography, if sincere, can seldom fail to have some interest. But Lord Elton has achieved something which is a great deal rarer than interest : at all events I have risen from readings of many autobiographies of recent years less friendly disposed to the author than I was before I started, and occasionally a good deal more than that—exasperated by an irrepressed vanity. From Lord Elton I hoped for better things : I had known fairly well what he has done and what he has been and I know quite well what he now does and is—so I was sure I should be interested and I hoped I should be more—and yet how easy is disappointment ! It is deeply satisfactory to record that in the modestly entitled *Among Others* (Collins, 10s. 6d. n.) Lord Elton does not disappoint, and that is mild commendation : he has had an interesting life up to now—he has many valuable years to go yet—and he has produced ‘ some pages of autobiography ’ which are not only of great interest politically, historically, and psychologically, which are not only written with a high degree of literary skill, but are also unfailingly modest and delightful. This is a volume that truly has not a little of that indefinable quality, charm, whether Lord Elton is telling of his youth, of his war years, of his early battles as a Labour candidate or his later association with the MacDonalds, and over and above that, it is a testament of faith of no mean kind. At times it goes deep indeed, and it will assuredly win him many friends even beyond the large circle that he had before its appearance.

★       ★       ★

An interesting book, covering old ground in a fresh and attractive way, is Raymond L. Ditman's *The Fight to Live* (Lovat Dickson, 8s. 6d. n.), telling of the perpetual struggle

for existence in Nature 'red in tooth and claw.' It is full of incident and readable description: perhaps the most interesting reference of all is to the caterpillar of the African moth that tries to delude parasites by spinning a copy of the cocoons of these on the outside of its own cocoon—Mr. Ditman remarks that, this is 'one of the most unique delusions in the insect world'—which is more graphic than grammatical. But even hesitation at disagreement with so great an expert cannot prevent surprise at the old repetition that the markings on zebras are 'part of a natural camouflage in breaking the outlines of their bodies among foliage where sunslashes and shadows alternate'—zebras live out in the plains, not among foliage at all, and are among the most conspicuous of all animals in consequence. The book is well illustrated and will please both adults and elder children.

★      ★      ★

It is improbable that the admirers of Grey Owl seriously mind whether he was of white or of Indian blood or of both: and, if this is so, there was no need to 'vindicate' him—especially with such evident and unforgiving resentment as is shown by Lovat Dickson in the tribute to his friend entitled *The Green Leaf* (Lovat Dickson, 2s. 6d. n.)—nor does the little volume add much to our knowledge of a remarkable man; but as Grey Owl was so remarkable and his work held in such esteem by all nature-lovers there will doubtless be many who will be glad to have this record of the closing scenes of his life—and the photographs are attractive.

★      ★      ★

Another side of the North American continent is dealt with by William Seabrooke, who in an entertaining volume called *Americans All* (Harrap, 8s. 6d. n.) shows to any who do not yet already know it that the United States is made up,

distractingly, not of Anglo-Saxons wholly or even mainly, but of Scandinavians, Italians, Germans, Poles, and Russians—not to mention a few Irish, one or two negroes, and other visitors, who do not come within the scope of Mr. Seabrooke's latest activities. But these are wide enough : armed with the innate zest of the true reporter, the author has investigated the great melting-pot of immigrants, from which is coming, if it has not yet quite already come, a recognisably characteristic American nationality. It is not quite clear what Mr. Seabrooke's purpose is—information, presumably : it is, at any rate, eminently readable.

★       ★       ★

The eighteenth century has a special fascination, the age of elegance and drawing-rooms, of patches and powders, the age, too, of ghosts—probably if a census were taken, it would easily beat any other century for ghosts. It was a pair of eighteenth-century ghosts seen at Stowe that first turned the attention of Sheila Radice to the story of the now-forgotten poet, James Hammond, and his love, Kitty—and this it is that she tells in *Not All Sleep* (Arnold, 7s. 6d. n.). We start in London with the coronation of George II—and may amuse ourselves with contrasting that with the coronation of George VI—but then speedily pass in the train of the Earl of Chesterfield to The Hague, where most of the action of the book takes place. Mrs. Radice undoubtedly knows her period and that period is perennially interesting, and the story is told with delicacy and grace, but also so allusively that one reader at least found it excessively hard to make out what was happening to the various characters or why. At all events a novel not in the ordinary ruck—and that alone is much.

★       ★       ★

Poetry is strange stuff: though it was not of it that Browning wrote

*The little more and how much it is !  
The little less and what worlds away !*

nevertheless, those lines are peculiarly applicable to it, especially, perhaps, to-day when so much is written and so little is read. The observation springs from two volumes which lie before me, far separated in origin and neither at all likely to win to wide publicity. The first is a little book, a limited edition of which is printed in Portland, Maine, by the Rosher Press; it is a small collection of poems entitled *Fantasia*, by Wade Oliver, Professor of Bacteriology at the Long Island College of Medicine, Brooklyn. This is his second volume, and though he handicaps it by printing as the opening poem one of his weakest (and this though it won, so we are told, a poetry prize in England in 1935), it contains not a few little poems which have merit much above what one expects from such collections.

Secondly, I have received from Cambridge's a copy of what is termed the Sussex Edition of the Collected Poems of Cecil Floersheim (7s. 6d. n.), who died in 1936. This is a large volume of 441 pages and the printing and format are attractive. Mr. Floersheim's work may not be 'the little more'—but it is sensitive and thoughtful and repays more attention than it is to be feared it will receive in this prosaic, hurrying age. At all events, the publisher's modest hope that it will give me personal pleasure is realised.

G.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 179.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iii, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach him by 30th September.

'The ——— that ——— round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;'

1. 'I've heard bells ———  
Full many a clime in,'
2. 'The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the ———'
3. 'O Earth, O Earth, return !  
Arise from ——— the dewy grass !'
4. 'A Book of Verses ——— the Bough'
5. 'Who order'd that their longing's fire  
Should be, as soon as kindled, cool'd ?  
Who renders vain their deep ——— ?'
6. '———, as from an unextinguish'd hearth  
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind'

Answer to Acrostic 177, July number : 'The *silver* answer rang'  
(E. B. Browning : 'Sonnet from the Portuguese'). 1. SeA (Tennyson : 'In Memoriam'). 2. Island-gaiN (Browning : 'Song from Paracelsus'). 3. LileS (Tennyson : 'Maud'). 4. VieW (Browning : 'Thus the Mayne Glideth'). 5. EthiopE (Milton : 'Il Penseroso'). 6. ReadeR (Ben Jonson : 'Epitaph').

The first correct answers opened were sent by N. E. Greville, St. Ives Club, St. Ives, Cornwall, and Miss Williams, 12, Hydro Avenue, West Kirby, Cheshire.

THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

OCTOBER 1938.

LAST OF THE ENGLISH.

BY LORD GORELL.

I. SAXON SWAN-SONG.

THURKILL }  
GODRIC } *Housecarls, Thingmen of the royal bodyguard.*

HAROLD, *King of the English.*

GURTH, *his brother, Earl of East Anglia.*

EDWIN } *his brothers-in-law, Earls of North-West Mercia*  
MORCAR } *and of Northumberland.*

*His attendant.*

*The Royal Quarters, York : October 1, 1066.*

(HAROLD, GURTH, EDWIN and MORCAR seated in council :  
THURKILL and GODRIC on duty by the door.)

THURKILL. The King looks worn to-night.

GODRIC. And so would you  
If on your lousy shoulders had been laid  
The pestilent burdens of an overlord.

THURKILL. He took the crown on 's self : the Atheling,  
By right, men say, should have had it, were he  
strong.

GODRIC. When was right strength ? He's but a weakling  
lad,  
Unfit and so all's uttered.

THURKILL. Any odds  
I'd not have touched it in these death-strewn days  
By the length of my old spear.

GODRIC.

Sharp said, gray wolf;

Old sure enough will be that spear of yours  
Before the year is out. Heard you the news?

THURKILL. Of the Norman Bastard's landing? Aye: to  
hell

With his hypocrite band of knavish, foreign  
thieves !

Dragged here, dragged there, eyes on the Sussex  
coast

Till all my guts were droopy, then rushed  
north—

Never an hour to warm a witching jade

Or even to drain a stoup or two of mead—

Straight at these Northmen robbers ; I can feel

My pate a bell-clap with the blow on the helm

I took at Stamfordbridge—and all for what?

GODRIC. England, my bully : put that in your horn and quaff it.

THURKILL. And so I would, in faith, if it were mead !

And hardly have we ended hand-play here,

A goodly fierceness such as pleased me well—

Did you meet with that smashing champion at the bridge?

I guess not or you'd know the smell of carrion—

Hardly had we feasted the ravens there

On these sea-robbers than the crafty Norman  
sails.

GODRIC. He heard your back was toward him : would  
he face

That shaggy visage? 'Struth, the maids will  
not!

THURKILL. Nor Norway either, nor that shattered earl,  
The traitor, Tostig : rot 'em all, say I.

- GODRIC. Say it in mead-horns when the moon is old ;  
Right heartily will I revel with you then :  
It is now the Norman, and we march alone.
- THURKILL. Alone, how say you ? These northern earls  
have fought—
- GODRIC. In the North, old skull-pate : Fulford showed  
their worth.
- THURKILL. They took a dinting there, surrendered York,  
I grant you that, but now they are blooded  
hounds,  
Have gained the Northmen's rout and—
- GODRIC. —they will quit.  
We have quenched the blaze here, and good  
riddance to us.
- THURKILL. But, England ?
- GODRIC. What is England ? They are the North ;  
This half is theirs with fierce Hardrada dead  
And Tostig too : they'll lose no sleep o' nights  
That William harries Sussex ; that's their kind.  
They'll not be moved by any southern scream.  
Mark you the battle of their bitter words :  
Gurth's veins stand out and the King is like a  
cloud ;  
It goes not well—the mummerly-minded earls  
Give us good-night in mercy on their skins ;  
They'll not go southward for their envied King.
- THURKILL. Matters it so ? It will be no sport for cravens,  
But the fyrd will fight all stalwart for their  
homes.  
It will serve the minstrels well for many a year  
And be a tale for age.
- GODRIC. If age be ours :  
But where is the warrant of it ?

THURKILL.

harp's In good sooth,  
 that se lots so glumly.  
 It is not our task to scan the  
 Be not so hag-ridden, man: and, 1 yeas for these earls,  
 They'll flay the easier hereafter. 'g?

GODRIC.

A ye;  
 But that 'hereafter' is a tauntsome w. trench.  
 Who'll do the flaying? We shall catch t. leas no  
 more,  
 I much misdoubt me, Thingmen though we be,  
 This side the grave, more surely be food for  
 worms

In Sussex chalk.

THURKILL.

By the Dragon of Alfred,  
 The raven's croaking has a merrier sound  
 Than your prophetic humour.

GODRIC.

Very like.  
 When was the easy valiant of tongue  
 The foremost carl in the battle? I wager you  
 Three tankards to the brim, the score to be paid  
 St. Edmund's Day, if we live, I shall fight no  
 worse  
 For being afraid.

THURKILL.

Mum, mum: the council breaks!

EDWIN (*rising*). So! All is resolved. We guard our  
 northern thrones—

GURTH. Thrones?

EDWIN. Homes—your pardon if my speech be blurred;  
 The hour is late and we have feasted long.

GURTH. It was 'thrones' you said! Dark jealousy of  
 heart—

MORCAR. And are we not the brothers of the King,  
 Our sister royally wed?

HAROLD. Peace on your strife !  
The times brook not dissension at our board.  
You guard the North, will not march south  
with us ?

EDWIN. We have no quarrel, Morcar and myself,  
With Normandy : we took no oath to him.

GURTH. Is this your wisdom ? See you not the road ?  
English together stoutly must we stand  
By the side of our chosen King, the Witan's  
hope,  
Or perish dishonoured, broken one by one :  
Harold to-day is England !

MORCAR. No man is that.  
King of the English, not of England, he.  
We are Northumbria and he is Wessex,  
And to the people of the North and South  
He is now appointed to defend their peace :  
So let him strike for it. Take not too much  
Upon the salty current of your pride,  
You sons of Godwin. We will watch the North,  
Edwin and I, the brothers of the Queen :  
Yours be the honour of the Norman Duke,  
Outwhelm him with the valour of such strength  
As gathers round your throne ; there lies your  
road.

To that were you bidden, by the Witan as you  
said.

HAROLD. We will : be not in doubt, we will. And you—

EDWIN. We will to our watch, most puissant English  
King !

(EDWIN and MORCAR depart.)

HAROLD. Thus go the rats !



The chord of his relationship to me,  
Tossed out his sneer at my cold Queen ?

GURTH. My brother—

HAROLD. Have I a brother ? Am I not the King,  
And can a King have brothers ? Once we were  
A band four-square, the pillars of our house—

GURTH. Have you forgot dark Sweyn—and Wulfnoth too,  
Poor hostage lad ?

HAROLD. I have forgotten nothing :  
Our crimes and our wrongs alike are chained in  
me ;

Think not that I forget. It is the truth ;  
In spite of all, time was when once we stood  
The corner pillars bearing up this land,  
The sons of Godwin loved and feared—and  
now—

GURTH. Still are we so—and royalty is ours  
More than our strength of old ?

HAROLD. Gurth, speak you well ?  
The storm-clouds darken on us : we have thrust  
The Northmen's spear aside, and I stand here  
A King triumphant—but deserted too,  
And in the very hour when the treacherous winds  
Blow William to our shore. A heaviness  
Rides like a misty doom upon my heart : I see  
Tostig, our brother, rotting a log disdained  
Within this English earth he came to seize,  
This kingdom that is mine. Oh, England,  
England,  
A stag at bay with relentless, rival hounds  
Arrayed to tear you !

GURTH. She has antlers still,  
Yourself and I and Leofwin not least.



HAROLD. I know it well and there my comfort is.  
Give you good-night—and sleep be on your lids.

(GURTH *leaves.*)

Sleep !—easy it is to bid another sleep.  
Would I were Gurth, the warrior, the right hand,  
Not Harold, King of the English, through whose  
brain

Must tramp the procession of contrivances,  
The public utterance, the private care,  
The planning and the doing—as on his soul  
Is the weight of all the sins ! But praise to  
God

Who made my shoulders broad !

Sing to me, boy ;

For I am wearied to the fretting point  
And would be folded from these stony crags,  
These grieving, gale-swept forests where the  
mind

Is snared within itself.

Boy. What shall I sing, my lord ?

HAROLD. Sing me a song of gentleness and peace,  
A song that is at variance with my life,  
A song of contraries, a song of hope,  
Some happy fragment I would greatly dare  
To clasp into myself if once again  
I were to be as you are, all unvexed,  
The road before me and my strength of days  
Simplicity and fire undimmed—and yet  
It is no matter now : a song is a breath  
And so is Man. Play to your harassed King  
Who would be eased to sleep.

Boy. I will, my lord.

(Sings)

*At the rosing of the earth-rim  
 On an early April morning  
 (Heigh-ho, but the world and I were younglings)  
 As I came to the casement  
 Merry a maiden I spied in the meadow :  
 Bright her eyes were as the star-beams of  
 Heaven ;  
 White her bosom was as the beauty of sunned  
 snow.*

*Laughing, I laid aside my byrnie and my blade,  
 Let my shining shield fall flutter of fingers  
 through,  
 Went to her, song-lifting,  
 And my song was half a sighing  
 As I bent to the dew-dabbled dalliance—*

HAROLD. Foolishness, boy : this is no woman's world.  
 I would have meat for mind.

BOY. My lord, you bade me——

HAROLD. May not a man have whims, a King no less ?  
 I bade you sing to me, I know, of peace :  
 Is it not the word writ large upon my coins  
 And larger in my heart ? There let it bide :  
 It comes not yet to this divided land,  
 Divided in everything that makes a land  
 Save in the burden that is laid on me,  
 King of the English. Little chance is mine  
 To gather to my heart forgetfulness.  
 Sing me a saga that shall fix a man  
 Fast in 's courage : there is work to do.  
 Have you heard of Norman William ?

BOY.

Why, yes, my lord.

HAROLD. More yet will be to hear, a day of valour  
Redder than Fulford rout or Stamfordbridge  
Before this land can flight its way to the peace  
Of which its wounded spirit has such need.  
But little know you of these cares : they are  
mine,

Mine only ; on the King be all the load.  
Be happy in your littleness—play on.

BOY. A song of courage, my lord ?

HAROLD. I need it, boy.

BOY (*Sings*) *Over the roaring waters  
Cresting the salt spray,  
Came with a hiss  
The Ravens' long might,  
And beached its greed.  
Outsprang fierce Anlaf,  
Eld-long despoiler,  
Wind-strewn his locks,  
Wide-sweeping his axe ;  
Cried with a voice of thunder,  
Rushed on the spears  
Of the waiting heroes.  
Then was the tumult of trampling,  
The bitter-sweet crashing,  
Axe upon helm,  
Spear upon shield.  
The war-work is feastful :  
Anlaf and 's comrades,  
Stallions red-maned in wrath,  
Drunken with slaughter,  
Strain to the bridge ;  
Stands there as oak in the forest,  
Scornful of fury of storm,*

*Ælfgar the mighty :  
 Boast he will not,  
 But for glory is thirsty.  
 Ice-fingers grip Anlaf—  
 He hurls Fear behind him ;  
 Wolf-like, leaps on.  
 Upheaved is the sword,  
 The death-dooming Venger,  
 Siving by the arms of undaunted Ælfgar :  
 Down, down it sweeps,  
 Shears through the mail,  
 Through the neck-bones,  
 Deep to the heart  
 Of blood-spurting Anlaf—*

HAROLD. Enough, enough ! The battle rages here !  
 There is witchcraft in your voice : the roof-  
 beams ring !

Almost I see the riven body bleed !  
 Would you hale me back to Stamfordbridge  
 this hour ?

BOY. My lord, I have not yet risen to the saga's height,  
 The great-oathed shouts of joy in victory  
 When Ælfgar's heroes drive the raiders forth,  
 Blood-strewn and reeling, back to the waters'  
 clutch !

HAROLD. I will no more of it. Here is guerdon for you :  
 It is not to your charge that Life is blood ;  
 It is all about us—saving when we dream.  
 But do you love it ?

BOY. My lord, I am no coward.

HAROLD. Ha, do you answer so ?

BOY. Even so, my lord ;  
 Nor is there any man of all who follow

The golden figure of the Fighting Man—  
Your standard, my lord—who is.

HAROLD.

It is shrewdly spoken :  
Well am I served by men—and Man loves blood,  
From the cradle to the grave, from 's mother's  
milk  
Till he be lain in it. The day is at hand  
When you and I and all of us here ranked  
Will drink our fill of blood—and so to peace.  
Go to your couch, boy : I shall not need you  
more.

Warfare and Love—wild Earth's epitome !  
It needs, I doubt not, the minstrel's mystic art,  
The soft persuasion of the swell in the throat,  
The plangency of rhythm, the veil on Truth,  
By alchemy most potent to compound  
The several elements, the hate, despair,  
Terror, and fell ambition—that is the worst,  
The element most dangerous to Man's soul—  
Into the great elixir, give to us  
Gold and long strength for dross and swift  
destruction,  
To sweeten Life's alembic, covering from sight  
The follies and the foulness. How else is it  
That we can feel ourselves above the beasts,  
Raised to unreasoning ecstasies of pride  
When we hear anew the blood-racked deeds of  
war ?  
' From battle, murder, and from sudden death,  
Good Lord, deliver us ' ; and will He me,  
Will He deliver Harold, King of the English,  
The perjured Harold, as the cry goes forth

From Rome to the coasts of Normandy ? We  
pray

Like little children, heedless that we strive  
With all our strength to make our prayer  
despised

By any God of reason : ' sudden death '—  
We seek it, tempting God wherever we turn.  
We glorify it as the end of heroes,  
The consummation and the earthly crown  
That waits, song-wreathed, on courage : even  
this boy,

Asleep as swiftly as a folded flower  
At the sun's setting, knows no other prize.  
And yet we pray to be delivered from it,  
Calling ourselves the sons of the Most High,  
The children of Light, the chosen heirs of Love.  
God, God, the vanity ! And do I pray ?  
And, if I do, do my prayers rise to Heaven ?

' Perjured '—a weight of accusation strains  
My utterance from ascent : and yet what turn  
Could then have served me but that taken oath ?  
Edward had need of me and all the land,  
This land I love to the peril of my soul.  
Would I have been in the right if I had weighed  
My individual hope, my way to Heaven,  
Against that whelming need ? To that was I  
bidden.

No King was I, but the arm and brain of a King  
Too holy, too unearthly to endure  
The cares of governance, the crowded stress  
Of a pulsing world of men. How can a mind  
Be holy and a King's ?' On a King is laid

The bonds of action, even of the thing accursed.  
So was I King ere holy Edward died,  
Responsive for the English weal in word  
As now in all beside : on me was forced  
By William's subtlety and irreverent guile  
A broken oath for England, a lost honour  
That this dear land might escape an alien King.  
I had not gained release from my Norman host,  
False as an adder coiled, had I not sworn,  
Sworn—though I knew it not—on the bones of  
saints

Craftily draped. Would I have taken that oath  
Had I known their ward beneath it and the curse  
Its breach would bring to me? Yes, by the  
Holy Rood !

Am I a weakling that I dare not be forsworn  
For the English need? What is a man's soul  
worth?

One man's beside a unity of land?  
What strength of claim can be to the bones of  
saints

Above the hearts of men? I lied for my land :  
If that be shame, I greet it, God forgive me ;  
All truth is reaped in Heaven, I have no fear—  
And, if it be not so, if I be damned  
Beyond salvation, I stand fast in my sin !

Peril of soul—what mercy can be mine ?  
The crown is on my head, and have I won  
To its freedom or to peace? Envy and anger,  
Twin hungry ravens, wait upon my tread ;  
And like a beggar's prating, I repeat  
My dolorous hope of unity and peace.

For this was I forsworn, to bring to my land  
These bands of reivers greedy for my blood,  
For my crown, the emblem of the people's life,  
Death-threatened now in Sussex. Not enough  
Hardrada's seven feet of English ground ;  
There wrought we well, yet is the end beyond.  
It lies, full sure, in Sussex—if there be an end  
Either in triumph or in death. The crown—  
Do I deceive myself? To every man,  
Whatever his estate, is brought an hour  
When he looks naked into his soul's pool,  
See crystalline his weakness and his strength :  
That hour is mine this night. Unrolled, I view  
The parchment of my crowded, climbing days,  
Pretences reft and God the passionless judge.  
I sought the crown, but lawfully, I swear it,  
And less of my ambition than to serve.  
To me the strength was given, mine the right,  
Nay, more, the duty to impose myself  
That these enfeebling feuds of bitterness  
Might by my hand be healed. Thereto I cleave  
As this were the judgment-seat and every soul  
Laid bare before its Maker—as mine is now.  
By dying Edward named, by the Witan chosen,  
Before God and Man, I am the lawful King !  
Was it not the primate of Northumberland,  
Eldred, who set the crown upon my head ?  
And Wulfstan, saintly Wulfstan, is my friend.

Shall Harold's name spell failure ? Had I slipped,  
A bond-slave, to humility and parried  
The up-thrust of the crown, what man can say  
The greedy Norman Bastard would have found



Satiety in 's dukedom? He would still  
 Be ravening our shores and none to oppose  
 With all the valour of this island race  
 That it falls to me to hone. Yet, God ha' mercy,  
 The arrow of my thought is gustily blown  
 From the truth's mark! Not all the valour,  
 no—

These self-girt earls, the brothers of the Queen,  
 They will not march with me: England may  
 perish

On a corpse-clad southern field this very moon,  
 And they will feast in York; they have no  
 quarrel—

Their smooth, forked tongue this night has  
 uttered it—

With Norman William. Blight be on their  
 souls!

There lies my perjury, for them have I parted  
 With the one kingdom that is every man's,  
 Lofty or low, the kingdom of his love.  
 Three are the women who, for weal or woe,  
 Have clasped their hands upon this life of mine,  
 Close-linked of name, of soul so different,  
 A trident stabbing my dreams of joyance dead—  
 Eldgith, my sister, wife to Edward the King,  
 A treacherous, bleak sister, Tostig's prop,  
 Cold Eldgith, Griffith's widow I have espoused,  
 A staff of straw breaking before it was leaned on,  
 And 'Edith of the swan's neck' that I love.

May a King love? I was not born a King  
 Or reared to be one: I was free to love  
 And in that freedom found the gate of Heaven;

With all the passionate power of my being  
I loved her, my own Edith Swanneshals !  
Aye, and I love her now, as deeply as a man  
Can love whose love is lost, is torn from him  
By a summons stronger than the happiest dream  
That ever visited Earth. We two were folded  
Into a bliss above the songs of angels,  
Too blessed to endure. Its flight was doomed  
By Edward's weakness and the English need.  
This be my answer, this my life's atonement ;  
I have yielded her to England, I have surrendered  
Her beauty to be a blessing to this land,  
Its buckler of defiance : I have given,  
For a dream of English unity, my love.  
Such is the lot of Kings ; they cannot love  
As lesser mortals must, divinity  
Enfolds them all about and they must be  
Their people's spear-point and the morning star.  
Is all for desolation ? God avert it !  
It cannot be that I have loved this land  
To my soul's twofold perilling—in vain.  
I march at dawn with such an uplifted heart  
As is born of the splendours of sacrifice ; I strike  
For the greatness of the future, for a peace  
That I shall bring as a dowry to this land,  
For the hopes that are the King's ! And, if I fail,  
My battered body shall be the final pledge  
Of the price my heart has paid !

And so an end  
To this all-stabbing tumult—let me draw  
Sleep's patience to my purpose, let me win,  
Ere the dawn break, to a brevity of rest.

[*"Tudor Tapestry, 1530" will be published in November.*]

*ELIAS BOMBARONE.*

BY MARIE ADAMI.

ON the morning of the 5th of October, 1226, a procession streamed up the road to Assisi from the plain. St. Francis had died the night before in one of the huts of the Porziuncola, and his body was being taken back to his city which was waiting for him. In the country round about it had been known for weeks past that he had not long to live, and the Perugians, so his friends knew, would have snatched him, alive or dead, if they could, to secure for their city the bones of a destined saint. So, when he had been overtaken by his last illness at Siena, his companions had gathered about him, and had taken him first to Cortona, and, after a few weeks, as he had desired to end his life in his own place, a secret route had been planned from there through the mountains by way of Gubbio and Nocera, and at Bagnara a soldiers' escort from Assisi had watched the last stages of this journey in safety to the Bishop's Palace in his own city. From that high house, close to the rosy-stoned Cathedral, in front of which a statue of him now stands, holding out hands of welcome, his voice had been heard singing during his last days the Songs of Death and the Sun, heard with some mutterings of dismay by the more pious of his followers. After ten days in this house, and at his own wish, he had made his last journey, and, still guarded by soldiers, had been carried down the oak-covered slopes to the Porziuncola, and there, laid upon a bed of ashes, and with his arms outstretched, he died.

But whereas the route from Siena to Assisi was silent and

secret, and the passage from the Palace to the Porziuncola was grief for those who made it, the last journey back again from the plain to the hill was one of open triumph and rejoicing. In the thirteenth century, as a contemporary chronicler says, 'a dead saint was even more important than a living one.' Francis was dead, but his body was safe. It had been secured to his own people, and it would be theirs for ever. During the night it had remained in the Porziuncola, covered with the gifts of Giacoma di Settisoli—the yellow shroud-cloth, the wax tapers, the incense—soldiers, peasants, citizens, and friars around it, and in the clear October morning it was taken by a vast company bearing oak and olive branches, flowers and torches, to the church of San Giorgio, at the eastern gate of the city, and there laid in a marble urn, within an iron grating, with an armed guard to watch it by day and by night. One man was responsible for the planning of these three journeys, for the eluding of the Perugian robbers, and for the preservation of the body of St. Francis for his own city and for the faithful of Christendom: Elias Bombarone, Franciscan friar, the close friend of St. Francis, the supporter of St. Clare and the Second Order, yet later to be the diplomatic envoy of Frederick the Second, the confidant and tool of Gregory the Ninth; a religious who became a great architect and a political agent, a friar who was allowed by his Order to keep a horse and a rich table, one of the first followers of the man who refused dwellings for his companions, but a follower who devised and raised one of the greatest religious buildings of medieval Italy.

Elias was himself a collection of contrasts, and in that he is like the city where his work was done. Some places change imperceptibly, receiving new lines, new proportions, more strenuous in an age of wars, more gracious in an age

of peace, but always with a slow transition. Assisi changed its lines and its whole character in twelve years. In 1226, when the Saint died, the wooden houses with their painted balconies were huddled on the lower slope of Monte Subasio, and the only big building was the great Benedictine Abbey on the hill above. By 1239 the western end of Assisi was crowned by a yellow fortress-like group of buildings, by two churches already in use, and by a square tower, whose bell, consecrated the year before, struck the clear rolling sound that filled the valley. The line of Assisi was altered by that tower, it had been raised by Elias, on the bell was his name, yet in that same year he had been expelled from the Franciscan Order.

Two lives of Elias Bombarone have been written : one by an Italian, Affo, in the seventeenth century, the other by a German, Lempp, in the nineteenth, and the second makes a spirited attempt to reveal the personality hidden behind the conflicting stories of the early documents. A man of such strong contrasts in himself was bound to evoke differing opinions in others. He himself left no account of St. Francis, of the Order, of his own life ; his endless activities, his diverse and many-coloured ambitions left him no time for letters, and perhaps personal reserve forbade any such inclination. Only one record written by him remains, his letter on the night of the Saint's death, to tell the Order about it. It is addressed to Gregory, Minister of the Friars Minor in France, and in the urgency of emotion a personal word escapes the writer : ' the loss is common to us all, but to me a particular danger, to me, whom he has left in the very midst of the darkness, surrounded by many cares and oppressed by innumerable scourges. For the true light was the presence of our Brother and our Father Francis, who directed our steps into the way of peace.' Only one

picture of Elias is in existence, and it is consistent with this letter. When the Upper Church at Assisi was completed in 1236 its single ornament was a crucifix painted by Giunta Pisano, and at its foot a small portrait of Elias, enclosed with the words : ' Jesu Christe Pie miserere Precantis Eliae ' : the letter to the Order on the night of October 4th, 1226, had been signed : ' Elias Sinner.'

What were the early chroniclers of St. Francis to make of Elias ? They did not find it easy to make anything at all, and achieved nothing that is adequate or consistent. Thomas of Celano came first, and, at the command of Pope Gregory the Ninth, wrote a life of Francis in which all controversies are hushed in a golden light of admiration, and where Elias is named as the one whom the Saint ' had chosen for himself in place of a Mother, and had made the Father of the other brethren,' the designed head of the Order after Francis's death, blessed as such at the end. Secondly, in 1227, came the chronicles of Brother Leo, and of his friends, those early disciples, who, holding to the original rule of St. Francis, which Elias had broken and was to break again, were in violent opposition to all he did, and, almost at the same time, a second Life of St. Francis by Celano, spoilt by collaborators, and with a calculated disregard of Elias. In the next few years other Franciscans, Jourdain de Giano, and Thomas of Eccleston, produced works which denounced him openly. Twenty years later still, Salimbene agreed with them, accusing Elias, not for the reason of Leo and his friends, that he had departed from the rule of his master, but because, in their view, he had degraded his Order in the eyes of the world. When Salimbene wrote Elias had been dead thirty years. A hundred years later the ' Fioretti ' yielded nothing of certainty and added little. Yet from these accounts, for and against, it is possible to sift the evidence, and, with the

help of later and more trustworthy historians, to discover something of the man he was.

Elias is often known to-day, by the few who think of him at all, as Elias of Cortona, but the name was not given him until the seventeenth century, and then probably only because his bones rest in this city. He was born, according to Affo, in the same year as St. Francis, at Beviglia, a hamlet a few miles north-west of Assisi, his father having come from Bologna, his mother from Castel Britti. As a boy he was a mattress-maker, but later his father sent him to be trained as a notary at the University of Bologna, and he returned from there to teach the children of Assisi their letters. There he probably was when he joined the Franciscan Order about 1212. Why he took this step is uncertain, and the probable explanation, and one which his later behaviour confirms, is, that he was attracted to Francis himself. It can hardly have been that at that early stage of the development of the Order he saw in it the seeds of a great ecclesiastical power, nor does anything that he did afterwards show that he had in himself the makings of Franciscan asceticism. He was, by family, training, and temperament, unlike all the earliest members of the Order, Bernard of Quintavalle, the cautious wealthy merchant, Peter of Catanii, the gentle doctor of laws, Giles, the simple farmer, unlike them all to the end. In the basilica on the Assisan hill many of them lie buried close to their leader. Elias's name is found on a forgotten tablet in the dark vestry at Cortona, and if, to-day, his grave is sought out, the friar who raises the dusty mat which covers it is likely to say, 'Solamente Elia,' surprised at the visitor's curiosity. Nothing is known of him as a member of the Order until 1217, and to understand his place in it and the work he then began we must look for a moment at the world in which he lived.

The Europe in which the lives of Francis and Elias were passed, the last quarter of the twelfth century and the first quarter of the thirteenth, was a Europe of transition, emerging from the Dark Ages into an artistic and intellectual renaissance. The fact that Francis's father, a wool merchant of Assisi, travelled to France and gave his son a French name is significant of the practical internationalism of the time that had overthrown the frontiers of Europe. In the half-century before Elias was born, Henry the Second laid the foundations of English law, Abelard's students were gathered on the Île de France, French Romanesque architecture had reached its height, and troubadours were singing as they marched. The Papacy had consolidated its power, and now stood like a rampart protecting a unity of belief which had spread over most of Europe. Innocent the Third became Pope in 1198, and ushered in an age of change and reconstruction. Elias was ten years old when the Third Crusade closed, and three years after the death of Francis, Frederick was crowned King in Jerusalem.

Within the Church the first spiritual energy of the cloister was failing. St. Bernard was dead, the inspiration of his great sermon below the Abbey at Vezelay had faded, the standards of Benedictinism had slackened. Within civic life there was unrest and insecurity. Italy was divided into provinces and small municipalities where local jealousy was strong, and where petty strifes and battles were constant. Against this background of a changing Europe, a weakened religious discipline, an insecure civic and communal life, the Franciscan Order arose ; its founder and his Minister-General, Elias, were each of them productions of this background, though the opposites of each other. Francis advanced against the troubles within the Church and the world. What he saw threw light into religious life where it had become



weak and dark, and carried the ancient precepts with new life and as if for the first time into the ordinary world of men. But politically his influence was not less ; the battle of Ponte San Giovanni, the tiny village on the grey Tescio, where he fought in 1200, and, as a consequence, was sent to prison for a year, was fought between the nobles of Perugia and the Assisan commune. When, eleven years later, a treaty of peace was signed, it was Francis who helped to frame it, and the creation of the Third Order of St. Francis for laymen was not only the first real advance towards democracy in Italy but a blow against feudalism. It arose at the inspiration of a man who was a mystic and an aristocrat, but who admitted no frontier of race or class ; his follower Elias, equally the product of this century of transition, contrast and growth, who watched his leader's achievements through their later developments, was a bourgeois, who rose to be the friend of Popes.

He appears first in the Franciscan Order in 1221, at a critical point in its history, at a parting of the ways. Since 1210, when, standing before Innocent the Third to plead his cause, Francis had, with the tongue of a poet, described his Order as a Poor Woman, bride of a King, whose children, though obscure and in poverty, should yet be accepted at court, the Order had spread rapidly and far. Between 1211 and 1215 the Saint himself made missionary journeys in Europe and to the East, his friars had penetrated to Northern and Central Italy, and in Rome the great Cardinal Ugolino had become his friend, having seen in his Order a driving force which could be used to purge the Church. In 1217 the first Provincial Ministers were established, and were sent to farther Italy, to Spain, France, Germany, and Syria. Already there was a Kingdom of Jerusalem, with many Catholic colonies established in Palestine, and it seems likely

that the Minister for this last, the most isolated and difficult task, was chosen by Ugolino, with Francis's consent. They knew their man and sent Elias. Of his journey to Syria we know nothing, of his time there only one thing—that he made an important convert to the Order, a famous German preacher, Cæsar of Speyer. Of his return journey we know much more. According to the Chapter of 1219 Francis went to Egypt, and joined the Christian army besieging Damietta, and, after the fall of the city, and a visit to the Sultan, crossed the sea to Acre in the spring tides of 1220. There he was met by Elias, and it was there that disquieting news from Assisi reached them. A certain brother Stephen arrived, carrying with him a copy of new constitutions imposed on the Order by the Vicars during Francis's absence, and, in the name of his adherents, begged for his return.

When the next boats sailed in September, 1220, he left for home. 'He took with him,' says one of his modern historians, 'Brothers Elias, Peter Catanii, and Cæsar of Speyer, for he felt that he had need of these men with their knowledge of affairs, and they were men in whom he had a great trust.' Their various positions were defined soon after their return. Cæsar of Speyer was sent soon to his native Germany, Peter of Catanii was made Vicar of the Order, but died six months later, and Elias was elected in his place. For the last five years of Francis's life the fortunes of the Order, its outward policy, the guidance of its internal affairs, and the care of its founder were in Elias's hands. With the upbringing of an Assisan, with his University training, with the experience of responsible administration beyond the seas, he was the natural one to assume command. He symbolised the passing of the Order into its second stage; it had been inspired by a man of vision, it was now to be governed by a man of action.

For what were the problems which had brought Francis

home and with which he and Elias had to deal? They had not grown up in a night: they had burst into flame while Francis was away, but they had been smouldering ever since 1217; they were the reactions of his followers to a Rule too hard for them to follow. The words which Francis had heard in the ruined chapel of San Damiano had been words of an extreme simplicity. 'Go and repair My Church.' To the Saint they did not admit of qualification. He had obeyed in the literal and in the metaphorical sense. He had carried the stones and raised again the walls of the chapel where the command had been given him, and in his heart and in his outward way of life, he had, from that moment, committed himself to an imitation of the perfect life of Christ. That life had not been, as he knew, the life of an intellectual, nor of an ecclesiastic, not the life of a monk enclosed within a walled space, but the life of a craftsman, earning his bread by the work of his hands, laborious, uncertain, with an entire disregard of comfort, with less fixed habitation than the foxes who had holes, or the birds of the air who had nests, with no possessions, yet the lover of flower and field, the friend of the natural world and of men, at their unending service by day and by night, a selfless surrendered body and spirit, a serene and burning charity. To live life thus, so only, as Francis saw it, might the Church be repaired and rebuilt. In that conviction and at that command he had gathered his brothers and founded his Order, and the Rule he had written for it enjoined nothing more than that they, like himself, should be wanderers, living the Christian life according to its first pattern, knowing no fixed house, with no books beyond the Gospel, no clothing beyond a rough covering, at the mercy of all weathers, and the capricious moods of men. Perfect Joy, as he explained to Brother Leo, might even be found in being

beaten into the snow as thieves and robbers from the door of the Porziuncola.

Brothers Leo, Masseo, Bernard, and Giles might be able to keep this ideal, but it was too hard for his later followers, too precarious a life, balanced on the edge of need and hunger; even the unlettered found it to be so, and others craving books and study in a Europe where Universities were rising found it harder still. In 1219, during his absence abroad, a certain brother de Barton had begun enlarging the Porziuncola, which Francis, opposed to any settled dwelling for his friars, had accepted as a necessary meeting place for Mass and devotions, and in 1221, when he paused in Bologna on his return from Syria, he found that a large convent had been raised there by Peter Staccia as a study house for the Brethren, and claimed by them as the property of the Order. They must have, so they said, a settled place to live in, the demands of the mind must be satisfied. Learning was sweeping over Europe; Bologna had 10,000 students, Dominic's friars were allowed to study, why should not Francis's friars do the same? The holding of property, the pursuit of the intellect for its own sake, these were the problems which had arisen in his enlarged Order while he had been away in Syria; they were in direct opposition to his original rule, they were viewed with consternation by his earliest disciples, and they had called him back to deal with them.

He could not have dealt with them alone, and two men, one within the Papal court, one within his own spiritual family, set to work with him upon them, Ugolino and Elias. The first was, with the Pope's consent, made protector of the Order, and, with a diplomat's tact, calmed Francis's fears, drew up new constitutions with his help, and induced him to allow his friars to use the Bologna convent when it

had been reopened as the property of the Holy See. Mean-time, at Assisi, Elias already had been elected Vicar-General. Three thousand friars assembled at the Porziuncola for the Chapter of 1221, and, looking at that great company, Elias must have seen his own ambitions for rule and domination take shape as never before. For he alone, it seems, could understand the revolt, could see both sides, could realise the position as a whole. Why should not the learned be allowed learning? They would take it, as he knew, even if they were forbidden it, and he himself had agreed that the lay brothers should have books for study; again, as he saw, so large a number could not be conformed to one type of personality, the impostor, the disloyal, would take advantage of simplicity, and discipline would be loosened. On the other hand, guarded by the Church, controlled and fortified by study, what might not such an Order achieve? Ugolino and the Papacy were now behind it, and with himself as leader, its power might be great.

These, as his later actions show, must have been among his reflections as he sat and listened to Francis, who, having rewritten his Rule with the help of Cæsar of Speyer, a Rule in which the primitive vocation was reaffirmed despite all opposition, delivered it to the assembly. But they were not Elias's only thoughts. He was a man of action, but he had imagination, a man of violence and passion but a man of heart. He had lived and travelled with Francis, and they had things in common, courage, and a hatred of assumed piety. To those qualities in Francis and to others, Elias had given his homage and gave it still. 'Blessed be the Lord my God, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight,' was Francis's text at Mass, as he urged the primitive life of the Gospels on his reluctant friars. This was mettle that Elias understood, fearless and undaunted in the face of

dissappointment and refusal. Seven days later, at the close of the Chapter, the friars were recalled, at Francis's request, to arrange for the mission to Germany. He was too weak to address them himself, and, sitting on the ground, told Elias what to say.

The scene is significant. According to one of the 'Fioretti' legends, Elias, in pride, once refused admission to an angel, who craved entry to a Franciscan house, disguised as a comely youth. Whatever his experience of angels he had had daily experience of a saint. Whatever his ambitions for himself and the Order, Elias was, from the time of this Chapter, the protector of Francis as well as his Vicar-General, the guardian of a personality which had drawn from him, although a man of the world, his astonished allegiance and his love. His reason might hold with the opposing party, but his heart was with his leader. Could he combine the two?

During the next five years he made efforts to do so. Francis was much away from his city during this time, passing through the last great events of his life, the winter visit to Greccio, the vision of the Seraph on Monte Alverna, the composition of the Canticle of the Sun, and he was beyond the quarrels of his friars. At Assisi Elias was in charge as Vicar-General, not himself observing the Rule closely, but guiding the two opposing parties, the close observants, and the first rebels against its restrictions. But this was not his only or indeed his chief occupation; there was, as well, the care of his leader. When Francis's illness became worse, it was Elias who persuaded Ugolino to induce him to be treated by the Pope's doctor at Rieti, and, when the internal poisoning from which he suffered had brought on blindness, and the doctors prescribed cauterization of the upper cheek, it was Elias's permission that the

Saint demanded. Brother Elias was his Superior, said Francis ; if he determined it to be necessary he would submit. It is recorded that the attendant friars left the room when the first operation was to take place, being unable to bear the sight : it seems likely that Elias, being responsible, remained behind. Some weeks later, when Francis gave his last blessing, Elias was there again. Stripped of the pious adornments of Thomas of Celano's first Life of the Saint, where the incident is recorded, one fact is clear : Francis gave his blessing to his friars with his hands crossed ; his right hand was placed on the head of Elias who knelt on his left.

He was forty-four when Francis died in 1226, a strong man, energetic and wilful as his portrait shows, proud, secure in his power, but he had the imagination which a man of action sometimes lacks. He did not forget this scene ; for two years before he had been pursued by a dream in which the Saint's death had been foretold to him, and in the interval he had laid his plans. As soon as Francis's body was safe in the Church of San Giorgio at Assisi he began to put them into shape.

Events played into his hands. At the Chapter held in 1227 a man of moderate views, Giovanni Parenti, was elected Vicar-General, and Elias was free to pursue his object, the raising of a shrine to the memory of Francis, which should be as well a centre for the Order. The Papacy was behind him, for Cardinal Ugolino became Gregory the Ninth six months after Francis died, he spent part of that summer at the Bishop's Palace in Assisi, and he associated himself with all Elias's plans. He set Thomas of Celano to write the Saint's life, and money began to flow in. By the end of that year a site had been given, a plan had been decided upon, and the foundations had been drawn

out. In the Assisan archives there is still preserved a document showing that the site was given to Elias as representative of the Pope. It is there described as an oratory or church for the body of Francis ; it was also, in Gregory's design, to be a summer home for the Popes, and a Papal treasury. The union of Rome and Assisi was complete.

In July Francis was canonised. Celano, a spectator, describes in his second Life the scene outside San Giorgio, the scaffoldings hung with bright cloths for the enormous crowd, when Gregory, in robes stiff with jewels, delivered an address on the virtues of the little poor man of Assisi, and raised him to the heavenly hierarchy. Two days later he laid the foundation-stone of the Basilica. Interest in it had spread far and wide. The King and Queen of France had travelled to kiss the body, bearing rich presents, money was coming in from every country in Europe. By the end of 1229 the Lower Church was almost complete, and part of the Convent was ready to house those friars who approved. By May, 1230, everything was ready for the day when Francis's body should be removed from San Giorgio to the place Elias had prepared.

The events of that day were planned and carried out by him ; they mystified faithful Assisans then and for six centuries, and there is no agreement among the chroniclers as to what is the true story. A great multitude, we are told, gathered at San Giorgio. Three papal legates had been sent by Gregory, one of whom carried a hymn on the virtues of the Saint composed by the Pope, another a gold reliquary containing a fragment of the True Cross. All was in readiness for the final act, but from that moment the body disappeared. At this point the chroniclers fail to agree. One says that, as the procession approached San Francesco, the oxen dragging the cart on which the body lay, the soldiers



mixed with the crowd and held the door of the Lower Church, while the body was rushed inside and hastily buried. Others declare that, when the time for the Translation came, the body was found to have been already disposed of in the church by Elias and his friends, with the connivance of the Assisan municipality. It is most likely that the second is the true story, but either shows the power of Elias, his position in the city, his imagination, and his persistent devotion to Francis. He must have been aware that to carry through any such plan would bring upon him the wrath of the Pope, but to keep the body safe, equally from the fanatical devotion of the faithful, and from the robbers of neighbouring cities, he was willing to flout Gregory and his displeasure, and to suffer any penalties which might descend. He chose his conspirators, the Mayor and communal officers of Assisi, and they worked according to his plans. There was never any formal burying of the body of St. Francis on the day of the Translation from San Giorgio, for the simple reason that the body had been already buried, perhaps at dead of night by Elias, a few citizens and soldiers alone keeping guard. Thus it was that the thousands of sightseers and admirers, the assembled friars, and the Pope's Legates, had nothing to see for their journey, and after scenes of tumult, protest, and confusion they left for their homes. The work had been done well, the body was not found.

Three centuries later, Vasari tells the legend which had grown up in Assisi—that below the foundations of the Basilica was another and a hidden church, a church of which the people at the time knew nothing, a place hewn in the rocks, where St. Francis waited, ‘almost alive,’ standing erect, his hands crossed in prayer, and so late as 1704, a plan of this invisible church was drawn out by Padre Angeli, as

being a third building below the other two. But the place of burial remained a mystery. More than once, in the following centuries, Elias's precautions were justified when the Perugians tried to remove the pavement of the Lower Church in their search for the body, but they failed to find it. It was not until 1818 that a search sanctioned by the Vatican, and carried on secretly at night for nearly two months, discovered the sepulchral urn, and within it the bones of St. Francis. The urn had been fitted between blocks of travertine taken from the Roman wall, and set deep among the foundations below the High Altar of the Lower Church. Before the close of 1819, within those ancient foundations, a new chapel was hewn out, an altar was consecrated, and above it, enclosed by an iron grating, the urn was set. There the bones still lie, unmutilated and secure. Elias had achieved his first purpose. Because of him there are to-day no scattered relics of the body of St. Francis.

The Franciscan Basilica is one of the most popular religious shrines in Europe, but to see it as it is to-day is to see something more than was in the mind of Elias when he planned and built it. As he sat and wrestled with his ever-increasing correspondence, sending out petitions to every country he knew, watching donations come in from his friars, or, walking up from the Porzioncola where he and his companions were still living, saw the yellow walls rising, even he had probably little idea of the influence the place was to be. The site, on the rocky edge of the western hill, was separated from the city by a deep ravine, which was not filled in until the sixteenth century ; it made, therefore, an excellent refuge for the Papal Treasure, secluded, high, and so raised as to defy attack on all sides. On the spur there was light and space, room on which a great group of buildings might

be placed, as Elias saw. The cloister, chapter-house and terrace were all in his first plan, though they were not completed in his lifetime, and the two churches, the lower for the use of the friars, the upper for preachings and public services, were designed by him. But though, through his energy, both churches were finished before 1240, and he must have drawn some satisfaction from that knowledge, the full results of that energy were hidden from him. He was to be dead before the Council of Narbonne in 1260 recommended the Upper Church as a model for all the new churches of Central Italy, and many years before the Ara Cæli was rebuilt by the Franciscans on the Capitol in Rome. Nor did he know of the effect it was to have on the art of his country, as he saw the Upper Church roofed in, light and airy, with its high bare walls, and the arches of the triforium, behind which the mighty angels and cherubim of Cimabue were to stream, while, lower down on the western wall, Giotto was to show the Saint, bending over the birds in a soft human mingling of peasant blues and browns. At the end of the twelfth century painting in Italy was monastic and symbolical. At the end of the thirteenth Giotto had covered the dark walls of the Lower Church with his frescoes, and, shining on the dim arches, were not only the allegorical figures of Virtues and Powers, but the familiar stories of the Saint himself, walking below the balconied houses of his city, bending, healing, part of the incidents of an ordinary day. With the Canticle of the Sun and the frescoes of Giotto the Byzantine age died in Italy, and in art, at least, the reign of nature began.

But while the Basilica was rising there was still the Order to be governed, and it needed a strong man to do it. It is clear that, however much his piety and his Franciscan strictness might be under suspicion, Elias's abilities were

recognised, and in 1233, weary of the weak rule of Giovanni Parenti, the Order set Elias in his place as Minister-General. He did not accept the office without protest, his strongest being that he had never considered himself to be bound by the Rule laid down by St. Francis, and that he could not do so now. But these reservations were accepted, and, with the approval of Gregory and with the support of all those who did not hold to the strict observance of the Rule, he was elected, and settled down to six years of hard work. For it was during this time that he showed himself to be not only an architect of imagination, but a natural organiser, able to carry on and to develop Francis's enterprises. He sent out his friars from obscure mountain hermitages into great cities, to live among the people, to preach, to care for the sick, the lepers, in times of plague even to shrive and to bury. He planned missions to Moslem countries, to the Far East, to Morocco, encouraging and supporting in this last place a mission which Francis and he had set going so early as 1227. By 1235 there were Franciscans in Tunis, in 1238 at Aleppo; others were sent by him to Damascus and to Bagdad, to Constantinople, where some were, with the Dominicans, charged by Gregory to prepare the way for a reconciliation between the Greek and Roman churches. There are two letters to Elias from Robert Grossetete, Bishop of Lincoln, dating from 1236 and 1237, and both show sympathy for the Order and a desire for his friendship. Nearer at home too his power was felt. In 1233 a feud was ready to burst out between the small cities of Spoleto and Carreto; it was Elias who was asked to intervene, and, due to his mediation, the quarrel was submitted to the arbitration of the Franciscan Order.

One other fact shows his devotion to one of Francis's most cherished creations, his relations with the Second

Order. To the end of his life he understood and supported the aims of St. Clare, even though those aims, rigid in their unswerving obedience to the original Rule given her by Francis, were divergent from his own. In a letter which cannot have been written before 1230, Agnes, the sister of Clare, writes to her, asking her to beg Elias to go and see her as often as possible 'to console her in the Lord,' and in 1235 St. Clare herself is found writing to another Agnes, daughter of the King of Bohemia, who had founded a Convent of Poor Clares at Prague, that she was 'to obey the counsels of Elias, Minister-General of the Order, to put them above all others, and to guard them as precious.'

But though he was recognised and deferred to by the outside world, though within the Order his activities were endless and generally successful, though among many he was popular as a leader, there were two things that he could not do. He did not know how to delegate authority, and he did not realise the new and growing power of the clerical party within the Order. Years before he had encouraged the lay brothers to have study-books, even against Francis's wishes, but he was not a learned man himself, <sup>as</sup> ~~or~~ at St. Eble <sup>as</sup> not a priest. He knew of the Franciscan house <sup>at the</sup> ~~frehe~~ <sup>University</sup> at Oxford, that in 1229, at the dispersion of the <sup>within it, and</sup> ~~the~~ of Paris, many French friars had sought refuge <sup>sent to lecture</sup> ~~abroad~~, and he heard that from there some had been <sup>not realise</sup> ~~sent~~ abroad. He knew of such things, but he <sup>the</sup> ~~did not~~ realise their significance, and the academic ambitions of <sup>fresco</sup> ~~fresco~~ <sup>cottish</sup> ~~cottish~~ friars were not grasped by him. Settled in the Assisan convent with his supporters, looking in triumph over the grey plain to Perugia, whose jealous schemes he had defeated, living in comfort, even, according to some chroniclers, in luxury, with a cook of his own, a horse to ride, known as 'Custode' of the great church he was building, deferred to by

the local municipality, his power blinded him and he became an autocrat.

There were no more Chapters after 1233, for Elias did not need them. He had divided the Franciscan provinces into seventy-two and sent out his lay visitors to each one, to collect money, to report directly to him, overriding or ignoring national differences, and disregarding, either wilfully, or, as seems more likely, from ignorance, the growing power of the provincial ministers, their wishes, and their complaints. He was probably never really aware upon what their complaints were based; not upon the way in which he had departed from the original Rule, and had allowed others to do so, for these changes had been to their advantage; not upon his having raised a great church and convent in place of Francis's humble oratories and mud huts, for of those buildings they were proud, but upon the fact that he, an unlettered layman, should govern them who were learned clerks and many of them priests. Their complaints could not seethe for ever underground; the English and Scottish provinces rebelled, joined, gathered at Oxford to express their revolt, and at last, with the French and German representatives, met in Rome to lay their views before the Pope. Gregory summoned them all to meet Elias in the presence of seven cardinals at a Chapter called at Pentecost, 1239.

It is certain that at this meeting Elias did not help his own cause. His enemies concealed at first the real nature of their complaint, and based their accusations on his worldly way of life, to which he replied that he had never deceived them, and that the luxuries he had taken, and the power he had assumed, had been with the knowledge of his companions and of the Order. But he was no match for the Oxford leader, Aymon of Faversham, and Gregory, who had begun

by supporting Elias and by protesting that he had been elected because he had been the friend of Francis, saw at last that even his old friendship was not strong enough against so determined a majority, and declared that, if he was not approved by the Order, he must go. Protesting with fury, fighting to the last, Elias was deposed, and Albert of Pisa, the English provincial minister, set in his place. Perhaps, as he left Rome, he may have decided that it was curious that his downfall had come, not through the close observants and the simple followers of Francis's rule, but from their opponents, the clerks and priests, the very men whose progress his schemes had helped ; or did he perhaps think, as he returned to Assisi, of some of the words of Francis in his description of the ideal Minister-General?—'But he ought not to take pleasure in honours nor to delight more in being applauded than in being reviled.' Francis had been dead twelve years when Elias was deposed.

The great campanile towered above the valley, its bell bore his name, the friars were living in the convent, the churches he had designed were still being built, workmen were still carrying up the steep white road the blocks of yellow stone for the Upper Church. He had built Francis's monument on foundations that would not crumble, his leader's name and his body were safe, but his own career was in ruins. What was he to do ? His ambitions were not dead, and, alone at Cortona, where he went to escape from enemies and supporters, and from where, as in duty bound, he sent his submission to the Pope, he thought out his next step. It was one which surprised his Order not less than anything he had done before. He had always been friends with the Emperor, and had, until his deposition, been a close friend of the Pope ; in 1238 he had even been sent by Gregory as an envoy to the Imperial Court at

Cremona. Frederick and the Pope had recently quarrelled. Elias now saw himself as the intermediary who should unite them, and, in so doing, saw himself again an intimate of the Papal circle, regaining some of his old power, even perhaps something of his old position. He became a political agent.

He chose a bad moment at which to begin his new career, and it seems likely that, in view of his retirement to Cortona, and his submission, Gregory might later have taken him back into favour. As it was, all hope of that was soon gone. Frederick was carrying all before him against the Lombard League, from Germany to the south of Italy, seizing Guelph castles everywhere, and, at the moment when Elias joined him at Faenza, had banished the friars from his Imperial dominions, leaving only two in each convent to keep the services. It was spread abroad that Elias was the cause of this. Gregory had excommunicated Frederick, and he excommunicated Elias also as soon as the two were known to be together. From that day all hope of Elias acting as a reconciler between Guelph and Ghibelline was over. There was only one thing left for him to do—stand by the Emperor.

He had a tough and sturdy loyalty, and Frederick came to depend on it, and used him on many missions abroad, sending him to Hugo, King of Cyprus, to arrange a marriage for one of his daughters with the Greek Emperor, Vatace. In the church of St. Francis at Cortona there is still, in its ivory case, the fragment of the True Cross given by Baldwin the Second to Elias, as a gift for his services as Frederick's ambassador.

He returned to Italy from these journeys to find that Aymon of Faversham, his great English adversary, was dead. Some of the old enmity against him had weakened, and in



1244 he was even summoned by Innocent the Fourth to attend the Franciscan Chapter-General at Genoa, at which a number of his friends showed themselves eager for his return to the Order. Those who met him at Genoa, however, found him no submissive penitent, but eager to prove the injustice of his past treatment, and those who would have supported him were alienated once more. He was still, they found, faithful to Frederick. The Pope lost what sympathy he had, excommunicated him for the second time, and deprived him of his Franciscan habit. The Emperor died twelve months later. By the end of 1247 Elias had neither Order nor Patron.

But idleness was impossible for him, he had still his memories and his energy, and in the last six years of his life he made one the servant of the other. The story that he had been converted to the Order in 1213 in the city of Cortona has no foundation in fact, but it was there that Francis had spent one of the last months of his life, it was from there that Elias had taken him back to Assisi, and it was to this small city that he now returned, with a dozen or so of those friars, who, even after his excommunication, stayed beside him. He retired, not to the Franciscan 'celle,' which the modern pilgrim may see as he climbs up the cypress-lined path beside the stream, and which, more than any other of the Franciscan retreats, has kept unspoilt its ancient poverty, but to a small house, according to Lempp, his biographer, 'sobre et élégante, construite avec des matériaux de choix.' From there he planned his last work. If he could not continue the Assisan Basilica he would raise another place in memory of his friend, and he began the church of St. Francis on the hill, aisleless, lofty, and austere. Its construction kept him occupied for the next six years.

In April, 1253, he became very ill. He was pressed by the

Prior of the neighbouring Abbey to repent, to make his confession, to admit that he had been guilty of taking sides with the Pope's enemies, and to deplore his betrayal of his Order. To how many of these demands he agreed is not clear : it seems certain that even at this time he would not consent to submit himself to the General of the Franciscan Order, but he did consent to ask that he might be released from his excommunication. Receiving the request, Innocent may have reflected that Elias, so near to death, could do nothing more outrageous or unconventional, and he relented. But the city of Cortona lay under an interdict, the holy oils had to be fetched from Arezzo, and so late had the Pope's clemency been granted that though Elias was given the Sacrament the oils for extreme unction did not arrive in time. When, however, he died on the Tuesday after Easter, April 22nd, 1253, he was clothed again in the habit of his Order. One month later, with great pomp, in the presence of a vast company of the faithful, Innocent the Fourth consecrated the Upper Church at Assisi. Elias's body lay neglected and forgotten in the city of Cortona, but his work was done.

To-day, in Assisi, below the Piazza of San Francesco, there is a narrow lane, 'Via Frate Elia.' Nothing else in the city bears his name. Standing near it, looking up to the Basilica, rose-red in a winter sunset, a Benedictine monk with a famous name talked once to two English students. 'There was one, Elias,' he said, 'he was killing the intention of Francis when he built that place, but I am not sure he was not right ; you must have a training-place for the young, and a refuge for the old, and, after all, you can be poor anywhere.'

## THE MART OF THE OLD THINGS.

BY B. ELLIS DICK.

It was one of those lovely days in late October, when the Border country snatches a memory of summer out of autumn's dying hands. The fells squelched wet underfoot, after yesterday's rains, but the sun was westering in a blaze of gold amid fragile wraiths of cloud, and the dead heather glowed with a fictitious brilliance across the valley.

Wattie Milburn, son of a wild race of Rievers, shepherd to hard Jock Hedley of Craighead Pele, wiped the sweat from his brow, and loosed a fresh stream of profanity at his cowering colliers as he strove to round up the ewes.

It was not safe to leave the sheep out on the fells these autumn nights. There were too many foxes on the hills, and recently the shepherds whispered that raiders were abroad again; raiders, who had not been known in Redesdale for two hundred years. Wattie, who was a sensible fellow, listened to the talk of raiders with no great credulity, laying the blame for the recent losses among the flocks and herds at the door of some wily butcher from across the hills, and for much of the mauling on someone's hunting terriers running wild.

But things were bad enough, for all that, what with this French war, and Bonaparte threatening to invade England, and the cattle dropping dead with rotted hooves, and the sheep ill all the summer with the louping ill. If men had asked Wattie (which, since he was a difficult man to talk to, they did not), he would have told them to consider certain recent happenings in Elsdon valley.

Had not poor Tom Dodd gone blind without any warning, and Willie Hardy's wife given birth to triplets, and she already the mother of nine, and Willie himself away to the wars this two years gone? And Joe Milburn's cow having a calf with five legs, that had to be put down, and the cow dying on him and all?

Hadn't Wattie himself been like a man bewitched, ever since that evening in August, when, mellowed by sundry potations after the mart in Rothbury town, he had met the gipsy Ellen Haa by chance, in bonny Grassleas valley, and made swift love and furious, as was his wont with any pretty lass, there under the gnarled old oaks? No woman, before or since, had ever had the power to haunt Wattie's memory as she had done, to stir discomfort in his blood when she was nowhere present; and he had taken good care not to encounter her since. More fool he for dallying with such a maid, and her the daughter of a proved witch, hunted by all the decent men of Elsdon not twenty years ago, and doused so heartily in the Elsdon burn, that when she came up, being a black witch that no saints would help, she was dead, leaving this same Ellen, a child begotten none knew how, or when, an orphan. And though the village women had taken pity on the babe, and let the gipsies from Morebattle, over the hills, take her away alive, yet she had lived to return, alone, mysterious, to live again in old Nan Haa's tumble-down cottage under King's Dod, two years ago past midsummer.

Yes, Wattie saw it all, plain as a pike-staff; and now, on this fair October afternoon, Wattie himself strove with the powers of witchcraft, and in vain. For an hour he had been trying to drive the sheep off the high fell into the closed rings down in the valley; and for an hour he had cursed his dogs in vain. The collies *were* bewitched,

and so were the sheep. Storm as he would, waving his arms and shaking his crook, even resorting to kicking in his exasperation, the dogs lay crouching in the long bent and sullenly refused to work.

The ewes were even more panicky than the dogs. For no known reason, they were milling and running, halting with frenzied bleatings of alarm, bunching until the pressure of two hundred maddened bodies broke the bunch again, when there ensued another wild stampede in all directions. Had his dogs turned killers and started running the sheep, they could have been in no worse case. Their condition, after an hour of it, was enough to send any shepherd crazy. As, for the fiftieth time, Wattie stopped swearing to mop his brow, he wondered what he could have done to bring this curse upon him. He was a deeply puzzled man.

Suddenly a big red dog-fox broke cover almost at Wattie's feet. He was larger than any fox the shepherd had ever seen. As the startled man yelled his wrath and amazement, the two collies, snarling and sullen, turned tail and ran; fairly bolted, in fact, down the fellside. Collies, running from a fox!

The dog-fox turned and looked at Wattie, and gave vent to a sharp bark, almost a laugh. The shepherd crossed himself, and a second fox appeared, to windward of the sheep, and yet a third, running brush down, close to ground, appeared from behind them.

The three foxes took no notice of the man, despite his shouts. Working together, like well-trained sheep-dogs, they came in on the terrified sheep, who now began to move, jerkily, and in short rushes, across the fell, in a northerly direction. Wattie rushed to head them off; but his foot caught in a clump of heather, and down he came with a crash which took the breath from him. By the time

he had recovered himself, and picked up his crook, the foxes had the whole flock away. The shepherd rubbed his eyes and stared after them. But now there was nothing to see except the distant view of his fast-disappearing sheep.

‘Dod’s Eyes ! Ha’ the foxes turned Rievers the noo ?’ exclaimed the shepherd, and started running in the wake of his flock.

But now it seemed as if the moor itself was bewitched. Not once, but a dozen times, the man went sprawling to the ground ; the bent and heather seemed to stretch forth sly hands to catch his ankles. Bruised, exhausted and, by this time, afraid, Wattie came at last to the shoulder of the King’s Dod, and looked down over the valley to where the tall keep of Elsdon nestled beside the old church.

Far down the valley, already across the shallow Elsdon burn, and making for the long slope of Billsmoor and the hills beyond, his sheep were still moving, running steadily now, and apparently quite alone. Moving, Wattie thought, as again he crossed himself, as if the Devil himself was behind them ; as indeed, to Wattie’s excited and fearful knowledge, he was.

But—and at this sight, the hair on Wattie’s head crept uneasily beneath his bonnet—up the slope of the King’s Dod there came towards him the figure of a woman, with his missing sheep-dogs at her heels. Ellen Haa !

Wattie looked wildly round, contemplating flight. Then he looked again at his, now almost invisible, sheep. He would have given much to slip out of sight, to avoid this woman. But his master, Jock Hedley of the Pele, was a hard man. And Wattie was a good shepherd, with a strong sense of duty. And his duty was to retrieve those sheep, and to collect his dogs. So he thought to himself, watching the slim figure mounting easily towards him :

‘This here’s the De’il’s own business; and here’s the De’il’s own daughter coming her ways to meet me, wi’ my dogs. Mebbes A’d best wait to hear what she may hev to say.’

And stand fast he did, the brave fellow, though the sunset glow had passed out of the sky, and in the quick autumn gloaming his flock was no longer in sight.

She was a pretty wench, this witch of Elsdon; young and lissom, the Egyptian blood rising warm beneath her dark skin, her hair blue-black like a raven’s wing. The Devil sired good stock, thought Wattie, as he waited for her, stolid despite his unease.

‘What’s amiss, Wattie?’ the witch called to him.

‘What should be amiss, Ellen Haa?’ countered Wattie cannily.

‘Why, surely, summat,’ said the woman, smiling, stepping up the last shelf of rock, to stand at gaze beside him. ‘Surely summat, when two good dogs like them o’ yourn comes lowping doon the fell like as if the Devil’s self was ahint them.’

‘Like enough,’ Wattie nodded, keeping his eyes averted from the curve of her neck.

‘So ye’ve lossen your flock, Wattie?’ the witch remarked. Wattie started.

‘Now whey tellt ye that?’ he queried nervously.

Ellen Haa laughed gaily.

‘From the slopes o’ the King’s Dod a body can see well ower towards Billsmoor, lad,’ she said, ‘and I was gathering kindling in the woodside yonder, when they sheep came galloping doon off the Dod, all alone; and a minute later, doon comes them two varmint’s o’ collies, lookin’ like they’d been whacked silly. So I says to myself, them’s Wattie Milburn’s sheep; and yon’s Wattie Milburn’s dogs. And

I thinks to meself, I'd best see what's wrang wi' Wattie. So here I am. What is wrang, Wattie man?'

All this she said with such an innocent air, such a guileless, friendly glance out of her dark eyes, that any man less suspicious of the evil wiles of witches had thought her but a friendly village lass. But Wattie knew she was a witch. Had he not seen her, often, picking wild herbs and useless grasses, and singing the while her strange Egyptian songs, far out on the windy slopes of Wannie? Had he not been forced to think of her without ceasing, these three months gone, he who had never thought again of any of the many bonny lasses who had borne him no grudge for the bastards he had fathered on them?

Nevertheless, he had his sheep to consider now, and it would not do to cross the witch at a time like this. So he crossed his fingers behind his back instead, and thus protected against the Evil Eye, he related briefly the events of the afternoon. When he spoke, diffidently enough, of the three big foxes, the woman nodded, her bright eyes fixed on Wattie's averted face, and said:

'To-morrow is All Hallow E'en.'

Wattie swung round to gaze at her, with an oath.

'Why, Dod's Eyes, so 'tis, an' all.'

'They'll hev taken the ewes to the Old Things' Mart,' the woman said slowly, thoughtfully.

'The A'ad Things' Mart? What'll that be, then?' asked Wattie.

Ellen eyed him with solemn face in which, nevertheless, her dark eyes danced with delight.

'If I tell ye that, Wattie Milburn, ye'll hev to promise me one thing first,' she announced gravely.

Slowly the shepherd looked at her, straight in the eyes.

'And what's that, Ellen Haa?' he demanded at last.



She laid a hand on his arm, and spoke with emphasis.

‘I can tell ye where to find your sheep, Wattie lad ; and, foreby, I can tell ye hoo to get them back ; but only on one condition ; and that is, that when ye’ve won your ways home with them, ye’ll take me to wife. I’ll need to be your wife, Wattie, if I tell ye these things.’

To say that Wattie was startled is to understate the condition of his mind. Marriage was a very serious thing, a thing he had never even contemplated. But he was not a Northumbrian shepherd for nothing. Even as he stared horrified at Ellen, he was yet turning it over rapidly in his shrewd mind, already seeing a way out. After all, he had but to tell what he knew and suspected of Ellen’s doings, capping the recital innocently with whatever she might now be about to unfold to him, and no one, not even the priest, not even the minister, would marry them. After all said, the wench was bonny ; even now, at this sinister hour, desire throbbed in his veins ; had he not known it witchcraft, Wattie might have tasted love here, and thought it passing sweet. But MARRIAGE ! Not for him, to be tied by the leg and nagged at for life, like some he knew. However, there were other ways with women of her type and breeding. So he nodded slowly.

‘Gan on then, hinney ; tell us where they are ; if ye tell truth, I’ll think aboot it,’ he said.

The witch looked gravely at him, reading his mind like an open book. But nevertheless, she smiled, and gave his arm a squeeze.

‘They say in the valley that Wattie Milburn’s a man of his word,’ she said.

Wattie stirred uneasily. Then felt comfort in that he had only said he would think about it. Well, thinking broke no bones.

‘Gan on,’ he ordered.

‘Ye’ll find them sheep on the westward slope of High Cheviot, over the Braydon Burn, at midnight to-morrow night,’ Ellen told him.

‘What? Me? Gan tiv the Cheviot at midnight on Hallow E’en?’ exclaimed Wattie. ‘Wumman, ye’re daft.’

‘Daft or no, that’s where they’ll be,’ she answered quietly. ‘There’s a dying moon, and on Hallow E’en the people of the hills hold a mart of beasts for the Old Things, now here, now there, about England. To-morrow ’tis on High Cheviot. Dinna ask me how I know, but ’tis truth I’m telling you, Wattie; and if you hadna had a way wi’ ye, even in drink, Wattie, I’d not be telling ye at all. Take it or leave it. I’ve tellt ye *where*; but I hanna tellt ye how to get the ewes back. So, if ye’d rather gan and face hard Jock Hedley, gan your ways, and I’ll not hold ye to your promise.’

Wattie struggled between two fears. Jock Hedley *was* a hard man, and the great ceiling beam in Graighead Pele, which had hung many a man before Wattie’s time, was still strong and dark. To tell Hedley that he had lost two hundred of his best ewes *to three dog-foxes* was quite enough to make Hedley snap his fingers at the King’s justice, which had never held strong hold in Redesdale. Thieves, raiders, were understandable. But three foxes? Alliance to a witch (and an alliance such as Wattie contemplated) would indeed be preferable.

‘Dod’s Eyes. Ye’d better tell us the rest,’ growled Wattie ungraciously.

Ellen smiled, a fleeting smile. Then, reaching up, she whispered long in his ear. Finally:

‘So now, Wattie, remember; when ye bring your flock home, I’ll be waiting for you to make me your wife.’

And the witch vanished suddenly in the darkness which had fallen, leaving a shivering shepherd standing alone with his dogs, who nosed at his heels timidly, as if asking for pardon.

Wattie looked into the dark valley, and saw the twinkling lights of the village, where women were preparing supper for their men. There would be no supper for him that night. With a sigh, he drew his plaid closer, called the dogs to heel, and set off at a swinging pace to secure the old pony from the Bowershiel, as Ellen had told him. He wished he had a stout lad or two with him, but Ellen Haa had said, 'Let no man see you,' so perforce he must venture alone.

The white pony, being old, proved easy to catch, and Wattie felt better when he had put the long hill of Bills-moor behind him. Grassleas was black and mysterious as he passed the mill, keeping to the short turf to deaden the sound of the pony's hooves. It was a relief when at last he saw the darkened hamlet of sleeping Holystone huddled among its ancient oaks. He left the pony tied to a tree near the Church, while he made his way through the forest to the Holy Well. The waning moon helped him, or he would have been sore put to it to find that winding path. Presently the long oblong basin of the Well lay ghostly before him, its surface reflecting the cold moon, the Holy Cross in the middle standing gaunt, reflection twisting on the water. Wattie, who was, like most of his kind, a good Catholic, consoled himself as he filled his horn, that at least this was Holy Ground. Had not the good saint Paulinus himself baptised the heathen here?

It was grimmer work finding the old monks' rowan tree in the kirkyard. Wattie had known and drunk with many of the stout fellows who lay there, but he was glad when,

pouch filled with rowan berries against spells, he stood once more outside its precincts, without seeing any of them. By this time, Wattie was a tired man. Forbidden by the witch to seek food, shelter, or the company of his fellows, he found a dry place out of the wind, and, tethering his pony, he lay down and slept.

Dawn woke him, a chill, grey dawn. Shivering, Wattie broke his fast on the remains of yesterday's bait from his pouch, and a handful of the berries gathered the night before. Then he set out towards Harbottle, keeping off the bridle track, travelling the harder way of the fells, through the age-old forests of birch and rowan, which hindered his progress. It was well on to noon when he crossed the Coquet at Shillmoor, and turned the pony towards the wild hills between him and Cheviot. He rested here, fearing for the old pony, and the collies, which had kept well in to heel all morning, scouted amongst the bracken for rabbits, but did not wander far afield. Man and beasts felt vaguely oppressed, aware of some queer, aloof scrutiny, from what they knew not.

Wild and bleak were the hills in which they now pursued their way, and a bitter wind keened along the slopes of Yawspath Law. At Uswayford, he saw the Cheviot towering high ahead, the long dark back humped desolately against the darkling afternoon. And again Wattie felt apprehensive of some unseen watcher.

Now the going was hard indeed. Often Wattie was forced to dismount, and horse and man slithered over rocky slopes, or plunged knee-deep in dragging spagnum and slimy bog. But Wattie dare not pause, for his orders were to be on the side of High Cheviot before nightfall. Though the wind was shrewd, both man and horse sweated with their labours, as long miles fell behind them. A pallid

sun now ventured out from the west, so pale that its rays fell eerily on the wide vista of sodden heather, silvery bent, and dead, rusty bracken. But it gave, what the landscape had lacked all day, colour, and the shepherd's spirits rose. After all, what was to fear? He had tramped these hills since he was a boy, and never found them strange before. He looked more cheerfully about him, at the hills which fell away on every side, strange-shaped hummocks, soft as velvet to the eye from afar, harsh and cruel to the tread. A land of little hills it is, raising their close-cropped heads in adoration of the author of their being, High Cheviot, of whose age-old, youthful fire they were the outcome.

As Wattie breasted the last rise, and stood upon the crest of Crooked Sike, looking across the last ravine to the mountain, involuntarily he halted. A warmth of rose had stolen into the rays of the dying sun, and the sombre beauty of the long hill lay before him, bathed in unearthly light, as if the curtain stretched between man's time and the golden age had been lifted for once. In that light the darkening slopes seemed to pulse with slow and powerful life, as if the monster slept and, sleeping, dreamed. Silence hung suspended in the sunset, and shadows of great clouds, moving in the wind, drove across the hills. The Northumbrian drew a deep breath, and voiced his blood's response :

‘Bye ! That’s grand.’

The spoken words shattered the silence into a thousand pieces, and suddenly the shepherd shivered, recalled to his mission. Foreboding of monstrous things came on him ; behind the couchant mountain he sensed vast presences. The Old Things ! Wattie crossed himself, and kicked the pony forward across the deep little Braydon Burn.

Dusk fell as they climbed the last thousand feet to the cairn beside which Ellen Haa had bidden them wait,

Before they were well settled, the quick October night had fallen.

But they had arrived in time.

Then began the most nerve-racking watch the shepherd had ever kept. It was quiet, there, on Cheviot.

But the silence was alive ; and every now and then the wilful wail of the uncertain wind, mournful and elfin, dying away into a breath, a sigh ; and the dry scrape of heather stalks rubbing on one another, the sudden flutter of unseen wings not far aloft ; sounds, almost without noise, were enough to send the heart pounding. Little pattering noises of feet—*whose feet ?* Wattie wondered, and waited, tense, for the pinch of goblin fingers on arm or leg ; fingers which never came, but which he knew were there, poking and scratching round the stones of the cairn in the darkness.

Once, one of the dogs barked suddenly, a staccato yap of unease. Wattie's hand was quickly on his snout ; the man felt his own heart beating as quickly as the dog's, at the startled awareness which that unexpected sound brought to the whole landscape. For long moments Wattie could feel the hills listening ; he could feel the great Being on whose back he lay, peering with raised head into the night ; Cheviot waited.

Presently the night settled down again. The dogs, shivering but silent, crept closer to Wattie, and the only sound was that of the old white pony shifting his weary feet and flicking himself with his tail. After what seemed hours, Wattie was aware of a lightening of the darkness, and knew that the hour drew near, for the moon was rising. Cautiously he shook his cramped limbs free of the warm brackens, and on hands and knees peered round the edge of the cairn. At first he could see nothing. But gradually, as the world silvered into partial view, his keen eyes distin-

guished the outline of crag and shoulder, smooth faces of fell, and screes sharply black in the increasing light.

Directly below him, a distance of twenty feet at most, was a large, circular level space of turf, the close hill turf, scented in summer with thyme, which the mountain sheep love. About it, beneath the natural screes, a ring of stones, mostly fallen, relic of a people of the forgotten days. In the centre of the amphitheatre, a great square rock threw dark shadow, black as the Pit. And, as the shepherd gazed, this shadow seemed to move and swirl, seething against the rock like flood water in a mountain stream. Nebulous shapes seemed to form out of this blackness, shapes without shape, forms that were void of form. Fearful, Wattie stared, strained his eyes, well used to piercing dark nights, afraid to see, yet curious, agog. Wattie recalled the old tales he had heard in taverns up and down the dale, of blood sacrifices and hauntings in this Ring on Braydon side. Men said that priests of old had slaughtered here, long before good Paulinus came to cleanse the heathen in his Holy Well. Rubbing his eyes, Wattie looked again; yes, surely that dark shape *behind* the rock, out on the moonlit side, had not been there before? He shuddered, but dared not move. And waited.

The harsh cry of a wether broke the silence, suddenly; a ewe called, and another; there came the bellow of a cow; and a great noise of hooves broke upon the night, as into that enchanted circle came a heaving mass of beasts, sheep, cattle, calves; all uneasy, ewes stamping, cattle blowing; and at once there was much bleating and lowing, until the arena below him was full of angry, frightened beasts.

Surely, he thought, all the long-lost herds and flocks of the Border were here? Were these the ghosts of beasts

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stolen by raiders in days gone by, or were they flesh and blood?

The colliers stiffened angrily, and Wattie laid his hands on their crests, felt the hair erect and ready for battle, and felt, rather than heard, the rumbling growls in their throats. But they were frightened. They made no effort to break away, but crouched, shivering, all hackles raised, beneath his restraining hands. For, clear to see now, among the beasts black shapes moved, shapes of things unknown, huge, nebulous, ever-changing. And, weaving in and out of the snorting beasts, scores of foxes ran, snapping at recalcitrant hooves, leaping savagely at slaving snouts.

Far to the west, over the Holy Hill, the moon's horn appeared, a cold sliver of silver. Wattie looked and looked as if the eyes would burst from his head.

And now there rose a sound among the hills. Wild, lovely, it was, and terrifying; a sound as if all the winds had joined together in one long, wailing note, in which all the savagery of winter storms was mingled with the crooning lilt of summer-night breezes; it was like distant music, but such music as Wattie had never heard. The song of the youth of the earth.

And, out of the hills, to greet the rising moon, came the great host of the Old Things, great and small, cruel and kind, good and evil. All the old gods that England had ever known since the world was young, and the smoke of sacrifice first rose into the mists of the morning of earth. With their coming rose a great turmoil of singing and shouting. The gods were hungry, and they came to choose their sacrifices, long withheld by men, from the Hallow-E'en Mart.

From his coign of vantage, Wattie watched them approach, gods, nature spirits, minor devils, dreams and phantasms.



Leaping and dancing they came, some huge and stately, some short and stunted and ugly. There were hundreds of them. Wattie tried to count, but there were so many that he grew mazed. Five-and-twenty, Ellen Haa had told him. Here came score after score, and Wattie did not know what to do, until he noticed that some of the creatures seemed to have a light upon their countenances, an inward light, which shone about them, like the haloes of saints in the stained-glass windows of Hexham Abbey, but not so definite. He could see the features of these figures plainly, and it seemed to him that most were beautiful, and all distinguished; and it dawned on him that these bright beings were the Real Old Things, the true gods of olden time. The rest, mere hangers on, sweepers at the Feast of the Gods.

One eye upon the rising crescent moon, Wattie began to count—'seven, eight, nine'; for the life of him, Wattie could no longer refrain from thoughts of Ellen Haa. 'Twelve, thirteen . . .' It was an awful thing to think of marrying, and a witch at that! 'Fifteen, sixteen'; what would he do, if he woke one fine morning, and found he had fathered an imp, with horns and a tail 'Forbye, that would be the De'il's doing, belike.—Twenty; but mind, it *was* a solemn thought, that the woman might have dealings with the Devil in his own house. Twenty-two, twenty-three—begobs, A canna do it; but mebbes the priest will see a way oot for us; begobs, there's anither yin; twenty-five, by all that's unholy . . . and the bloody moon's nigh riz!'

Thus, Wattie fortified himself, and, feeling for his drink-horn of holy water, unloosed the stopper. He turned to his dogs, and in a fierce whisper bade them lie still. Then he crept forward, a foot at a time, until he lay just

outside of, and above, the ring of stones within which the beasts huddled.

And he saw that, by some miracle of Providence, the sheep nearest him were all of flesh and blood. The smell of them rose into the night air, and all bore the brand of Hedley of Craighead. His own ewes. He had but to take one leap to be in the midst of them.

The moon still hid a tiny arc behind the Holy Mount. He must wait and lie low. Wattie breathed a silent prayer, and watched.

The Old Things had now reached the centre of the circle, their lesser followers cleaving a road for them through the mass of beasts, which, queerly enough, had ceased their struggles, and stood herded together, the steam from their flanks rising like mist into the chill night. About the great rock those dark shapes were massing now, and Wattie, staring, saw that they were just like the salesmen at Hexham market, and that the rock about which they stood looked, in the dim light, very like the rostrum used by the auctioneers at a cattle sale.

And suddenly, upon the rock, climbed a monstrous black figure, and at once silence fell upon the whole assembly.

The figure was huge, and powerful. Two great horns sprang from behind its ears, and the great eyes blazed with an inward fire, scarlet. Wattie, to his horror, saw the Creature gather up a long, forked tail, and lay it over his arm. The Devil himself had come to auction the beasts for the Old Things !

This awful sight was too much for poor Wattie. Gods he could abide ; nature spirits were small fry, though uneasy ; but the Devil was more than he could look upon, and keep silent. Forgetting all Ellen Haa's instructions, the terrified man leapt to his feet, with a great yell. He meant to fly.

But alas ; even as the Devil turned to see what creature dared to interrupt the ceremony of the Market, Wattie slipped on a stone, and came tumbling down, right into the ghostly circle, into the middle of his sheep. The top of his precious horn of holy water flew into the air, and before Wattie could save himself, or the horn, the water was spilled, every drop of it, all over Wattie and the surrounding sheep.

When this happened, all the host of the Old Things, and the dark shapes, and the nature spirits great and small, all the minor imps, together with the Devil himself, came roaring and rushing towards Wattie, as he tried to regain his footing amongst the frightened and crowding sheep. Their vast figures blackened the light of the moon, almost hiding her crescent from view ; but Wattie had just time to see that it rested exactly upon the outline of the Holy Mount. The roar of voices was like thunder in the high hills, and the breath of the Old Things, as they shouted, made the cold night warm.

Too terrified even to remember his rowan berries against spells, or the words of safety whispered to him by Ellen Haa, the shepherd raised his clenched fists to Heaven, and in the awful stress of the moment, a great oath was wrenched from his lips ; a vow wrung from the awed and humbled soul of the man.

‘Dod’s Eyes,’ he yelled in agony, ‘A swear, if ever A get oot o’ this scrape alive, A *will* marry the girl !’

There fell a hush so deep, so pregnant, that one could hear the bats flying down in Braydon wood. The savage host of Old Gods, the scores of lesser deities, the hordes of imps and wraiths, aye, even the Devil himself, shrank back, as if from a mighty blow.

Noting the effect of his words, the shepherd stood upright,

and stretching out his right hand, repeated, defiantly and, at the top of his voice :

‘A tell ye, A *will* marry the wench ; and, what’s more, A’ll get the priest to dee it for me.’

The gods moaned and shivered ; their towering forms shrank in despairing horror, seemed to lose substance. This was too much. Oh, indeed, and forsooth, this was The Very End of it All.

Glancing nervously at one another, they drew back, faded, merged into the greyness of the old, old hills. The Devil gave a nervous cough, and backed quietly and unobtrusively into the night. For they realised, one and all, aye, even the Devil himself, that if a Northumbrian shepherd was prepared so to commit himself, and *of his own free will*, then, indeed, Their Day was over, and the New Age begun.

Wattie looked round the great circle, and behold ! save for his own two hundred ewes, with the brand of hard Jock Hedley on their rumps, the arena was empty beneath the moon.

Proudly and scornfully, he drew himself up.

‘And A’m a man o’ my word, mind ye,’ he added, as a final warning, in case any Thing should hesitate.

Then, smiling, he whistled for his dogs.

*BIRDS OF THE DESERT.*

BY MAJOR C. S. JARVIS.

IF the word desert is established in the mind as an undulating waste of sand and nothing else, one naturally does not imagine it as populated with birds and this is correct, for this type of desert except for small jerboa mice, is quite devoid of all life. As a matter of actual fact, however, these sand conditions are not by any means general, and are usually very local for the commonest soil formation of the deserts is dun-coloured, sandy gravel on which a few sparse straggling scrub-bushes manage to exist on the infrequent rainfalls.

This scrub country does support a certain amount of bird life which finds its food on the seeds of the desert bushes and grasses, camel-ticks and flies, and drinks from the early morning dew that collects on the branches of the tamarisk. The species vary according to whether the desert is definitely barren and waterless, if it is an area that receives an appreciable amount of rain in the winter months, or if it is in the vicinity of cultivation. A bird that I always connected with the desert at its worst and harshest was a particularly charming member of the lark family, the Bifasciated Lark. He is rather leggier and larger than the ordinary Skylark of England and somewhat lighter in colour with dark brown bars on the wings, but whenever one left behind the denser scrub of the coastal belt and struck out into the really barren desert some thirty to forty miles inland one would notice running rapidly across the sand and then rising with an

undulating flight odd members of this hardy little family. In the Spring he is particularly attractive as he is in the habit of remembering that he belongs to a tribe with a singing tradition. On these occasions he will recall that he is first cousin to our Skylark and will flutter upwards singing the first bars of the lark's song. Unfortunately he has no staying power, and by the time he has reached the height of fifteen feet he comes to the end of his small repertoire and swoops earth- or rather- sandwards on a long-drawn-out note that dies away with the end of his flight.

Although one more or less connects the lark family with the rich corn-lands or open downs of Wiltshire and other southern counties they are actually far more common in the deserts than in any other part of the world, for in addition to the Bifasciated there is the Desert Lark. He is far more common than one supposes, but his dull greyish-yellow plumage matches so wonderfully with the surrounding soil that he is by no means easy to see unless he takes flight, and this he seldom does.

The commonest species of all, however, is the Crested Lark, who spends most of his time on the recognised camel routes and who feeds on the corn in the camel-droppings. This little bird, with his perky crest, is general all over Egypt and Palestine, and one of his peculiarities is that his system demands green food in November. If the desert rains are late and there is no succulent plant life springing up under the shade of the scrub the Crested Lark maintains that he has a perfect right to invade the cultivation and feed on the green clover or corn that has just been sown. He is a very thorough bird indeed, and when a flock of crested larks attack a clover bed it is a very efficient job of work indeed. There is nothing to be done, moreover, as he is quite fearless and regards scarecrows and guns as a joke.

The only thing to do in the circumstances is to pray for rain and lots of it.

Another species is the Short-toed Lark, who is a local migrant, and one will frequently see a flock numbering several thousands winging their way northwards across the desert and flying with their undulating flight a few feet above the scrub. A very queer variety of the Lark family is the Horned, a thickset, heavy bird with two crests on his head that suggest the small horns our friend, the Devil, is supposed to wear. I have never seen this bird in Libya, and in Sinai once only, but he is common on the uplands of Trans-Jordan.

Another bird one meets in bad desert, and which was particularly common on the outskirts of the five big and very hot Oases west of the Nile, is the Mourning Chat, so called because he wears a most becoming suit of black and white. There are many varieties of this bird and many sub-species, and only a very skilled ornithologist can remember if the bird he has just seen had a black head and a white collar or vice versa; the fact remains that their general make-up is very glossy black and very striking white, and once seen they can never be forgotten. There is, for instance, a species called the White-Rumped Black-Chat, and possibly when I speak of Mourning Chats I may be sometimes referring to this little fellow, to the colouring of whose rump some person has tactlessly called attention. All that I can say in excuse is that both the varieties are a study in black-and-white, all very much alike, and are most striking and pleasing to look at. Ornithologists appear to have taken far more trouble to divide the desert birds into puzzling sub-species in the Mid-East than they have in the British Isles. Here in England the Blue Tit is the Blue Tit wherever one meets him, but if he were dealt

with by experts on Egyptian birds he would be subdivided into the Scotch, Welsh, and Irish types with some side-lines called the Pallid Blue Tit, the Yellow-faced Blue Tit, and the Cream-rumped Blue Tit.

In Spring the Mourning Chat (or White-Rumped Black-Chat) sings very sweetly, and at Dakhla Oasis I had a pair who lived in my little mud-brick rest-house that was situated on the fringe of the desert in the vain—very vain—hope that by building it in this spot I should escape the clouds of mosquitoes hatched in this Oasis. When one heard the cock-bird fluting happily in the early morning one imagined for one sleepy moment that one's window must be overlooking an English apple orchard all white and pink with bloom. It came as something of a shock when one saw instead, not blossoming green trees with cowslips beneath, but stretching away to the south, interminable waves of dun-coloured sand and forbidding white boulders. One wondered what the small bird found to sing about, for a Spring day in the southern Libyan Desert is usually rather forbidding and terrible with a wind from the south that would make a blast from a furnace seem refreshing.

This particular pair of Mourning Chats were most sociable and appreciative of human society for they had previously taken up their quarters in this spot when my rest-house consisted of nothing more than two E.P. tents and a small mud kitchen. When the tents were replaced by a three-roomed house with verandah they approved entirely of the change and at once made their headquarters in the roof. Here I imagine they bred, though I never discovered the nest. I felt that I was sufficiently recompensed by meeting the smartly-feathered little pair when they hopped on the table immediately I arrived and joined me at tea.

They were so confiding and so very friendly that there



was very nearly a minor tragedy. It was not actually sufficiently serious to cause a rift in the cordial Anglo-Egyptian relations of fifty years' standing but, viewed from the very circumscribed aspect of a lonely bird-lover shut up in a somewhat birdless Oasis four hundred miles away from civilisation, it assumed enormous proportions at the time. My Egyptian chief clerk went over to Dakhla to check accounts and on his return mentioned casually that there had been two little black-and-white birds in the rest-house which he had caught, put into a cardboard box, and brought back for his small daughter to play with. This is an old Egyptian custom that is very hard to eradicate because such a thing as cruelty to animals or birds is to them incredible—it simply does not exist as animals and birds have no feeling of pain. Children are given small birds with which to play and one wing is broken quite casually to prevent it from flying away, or if it happens to be a variety with a sharp beak the beak is snapped off.

'Not black-and-white birds?' I gasped in horror.

'Yes,' he said, 'black-and-white. The *farrash* (man in charge) said you knew them and that you would not like me to take them, but I did not believe it.'

He believed it later when I took charge of the birds and sent him back along the weary 120 miles of desert the following morning with the strictest instructions to let them loose again on the rest-house verandah at Dakhla. I suppose it is actions like this that give the English the credit for one and all being mad on some point or other, for how could an Egyptian clerk understand that two very small black-and-white birds meant anything to a grown man of mature years, and how could I foresee that my very able and erudite clerk would commit such a heinous crime as taking my two old and confiding friends and giving them to his small

daughter to play with? It is so difficult sometimes for the Occident and the Orient to see eye to eye, and they are still poles apart over the question of cruelty to lower creation.

There are many other varieties of desert chat but none so distinctively marked and so attractive as the Mourning species, and there is also a Desert Wheatear that looks extremely like our Wheatear at home, with the same engaging flirt of the tail and flash of the white rump from which he gets his Saxon name. These birds, however, do not favour the very sterile and harsh parts of the desert, but are found within reasonable distance of the coastal belt or in the vicinity of cultivation.

The most beautiful of desert birds is the Sinai Rose Finch which is not very suitably named as, though I have roamed through every part of Sinai for fourteen years and seen as much of bird life as it was possible to see, I never met this finch in the Peninsula. I have, however, always seen several in Petra, the old deserted City of the Nabbatæans, and as the general colouring of the rocks in this queer isolated valley is rose-red the bird matches his surroundings very suitably.

There is a queer little desert plover, called the Cream-Coloured Courser, that is common all along the coastal belt of the Libyan Desert and is fairly frequent in Northern Sinai. He is smaller and of slimmer build than the common plover and is an isabelline sandy colour picked out in dark brown with black-tipped wings. He runs rapidly on very thin stilt-like legs, and as these very slender legs are not visible when he is moving quickly one has the impression that he is gliding along in the air, poised about six inches off the ground. At much the same time of year and in the same sort of country one will see also the Senegal variety of the Stone Curlew, who is easily recognisable as his head is far

too large for his body and looks grotesque and his eyes are absurdly large and in the 'goggle' class.

Allied to these two birds is the Little Bustard, who apes the habits of the Beduin Arab as he is a nomad though not a migrant. One might drive by car across Sinai or Southern Palestine and during the journey see some twenty or thirty bustard, registering the impression that they were most plentiful. After this a year, possibly two years, might pass and one would not notice a single specimen. The Bustard is one of the few birds that the Arab recognises, and for this reason he is honoured by having an Arabic name, *Houbara*. The explanation of this is that in palmier days when the Sheikhs and big men could afford to hawk, the Bustard was one of the birds on which they tried their falcons and he was also considered something of a delicacy. I remember when I first met the bird in South Africa I was told by the Boers that he was just like turkey to eat, and when I went to Sinai years later the Beduin assured me he was 'Zai dik roomi tammam!' ('Exactly like turkey!'). As I have eaten the bird in both countries I am forced to the conclusion that either the Boers and the Arabs are equipped with indifferent palates or that mendacity is their strong point. The impression I received on both occasions was that he tasted like a very large and coarse pigeon and was only just edible.

The Sand-Grouse is a recognised feature of desert scenery, but he either obtains his food from outlying cultivation or from the camel droppings on the caravan routes where there is a certain amount of traffic. The Sand-Grouse believes in doing himself well, and when one picks him up one realises what an extremely heavy little bird he is for his size. With the Sand-Grouse, whatever his species, there is no question of eking out a precarious existence on desert

seeds and small desert insects ; his robust constitution requires a square feed of corn every day and he takes very good care he gets it. He has a most excellent Intelligence Department and immediately some old neglected caravan route comes into use again from some cause, usually connected with war, or some hidden *wadi* (valley) obtains an unprecedented fall of rain with resulting sowing of barley by the Beduin, the sand grouse H.Q. are informed of it. Down they come in flights of forty or fifty, chuckling merrily with their high-pitched rattling note and so long as there is corn obtainable so long will the Sand-Grouse pay his daily visit to feed, but once the supply is finished that particular part of the desert is free from sand-grouse until it comes into the corn-producing market again.

The common or Senegal Sand-Grouse frequents the Libyan Desert, but in Sinai this species was very rare and the birds who fed on our camel-tracks or corn-lands were usually the Coronetted and the Imperial. The Imperial is the largest and most senior of the family, a very glorious bird indeed with a conspicuous black breast that shows immediately he takes to flight. The Sand-Grouse, unlike most desert birds, is very insistent on having his daily drink—in fact he is a bird for whom everyone must entertain a fellow feeling ; he likes a square meal and something with which to wash it down. As he flies at a prodigious rate and with no apparent effort this desire for a morning pick-me-up is no hardship whatsoever to him and he will cover forty miles quite cheerfully for his liquid refreshment, returning immediately afterwards to his feeding-ground.

The two desert partridges, the Chikor and the Hey's, have the same ideas about food as the Sand-Grouse and compete with them on the caravan routes and corn-lands, but the partridge, though very strong on the wing, has a

marked disinclination to fly. He travels to his feeding grounds on foot and when alarmed he runs, always taking to flight only when hard pressed. For this reason a feeding ground to be popular with these birds must have in its vicinity a rocky hill or broken gorge up or down which these confirmed pedestrians can make their escape. Like the Bustard they are nomads and travel from one spot to another in search of food, and I have frequently seen a big covey of some fourteen birds plodding steadily along a camel-track bound for a feeding ground some forty or fifty miles away.

These partridges were most enthusiastic about my Camel Corps but had very little use for the Camel Police. If a desert post was occupied by the former there would always be partridges in the vicinity, but immediately the Police relieved the Camel Corps the partridges withdrew. One might have attributed this to a variety of causes, such as snobbishness and the preference to be in the company of a *corps d'élite* rather than with mere police, or a form of colour-bar because the Camel Corps were black Sudanese and the Police light-brown Arabs. Actually the reason was much more mundane and sordid; the forage of the Camel Corps was supplied by the Government and that of the Police by the men themselves. At feeding time the plutocratic Government animals shoved their noses into an enormous feed of millet and sent a third of it flying in all directions to show that expense was no object where they were concerned. The poor old Police camels, on the other hand, existed largely by grazing, and when they had their small evening meal of barley one would see them carefully picking up the very last grain with their long prehensile lips. On a police camping ground a partridge would have to scratch for a quarter of an hour to find one seed of barley,

whilst on that of the Camel Corps he could fill his crop to bursting-point without a single movement of his feet.

One now comes to birds of prey and carrion-eaters, of which there are innumerable varieties from the lordly Golden Eagle to the tiny Lesser Kestrel, and the huge Griffon Vulture to the Hooded Crow. There are so many of these birds that live by slaughter that the marvel is any of the smaller varieties can survive; the fact remains, however, that they do survive and appear to be easily a match in wits and cunning for their enemies. I once saw a covey of fifteen half-grown partridges suddenly take cover on the side of a boulder-strewn hill when a pair of peregrines swooped at them. The pair of peregrines were joined by others until there were twenty or more swerving and hovering over the outcrop of rocks. I was endeavouring to make a water-colour sketch at the time and for two hours I sat watching the peregrines patrolling over the unfortunate young partridges until I imagined not one could have escaped. When my sketch was finished I walked over to the rocks and drove off the falcons and ten minutes later, after some calling, the covey complete to the last individual walked calmly off to a small spring for water.

Actually it would seem that the birds of prey rely very largely for their food on big insects such as the indigenous locust, the scarab beetle, and the well-fed camel tick and also on lizards rather than on small birds. Moreover, they are not averse in any way to carrion and I have seen both eagles and peregrines on a dead camel. Of course the Golden Eagle would not like it to become generally known that he is addicted to carrion as for generations he has traded on the romantic picture of a royal bird soaring about the sky in a most regal way and only occasionally coming to earth to

pick up a pedigree lamb or a patrician grouse which he carries off to his eyrie. In point of fact the Golden Eagle will cheerfully, 'muck in,' to use an Army expression, with hyænas and crows on a very dead camel that proclaims itself 'gainst the wind a mile,' but it seems rather a shame to tell such a sordid story in connection with so imperial and aristocratic a bird.

Another popular conception one must destroy is what one might call the ritual of the dead camel. There is a common belief that when an animal dies in the desert the various birds of prey swoop down upon it indiscriminately and tear it to pieces, but actually there is as much ceremony over the proceeding as takes place at a Residency dinner or a Lord Mayor's Banquet. The keynote of the feast is social position, or perhaps one should say official seniority, by no means the same thing, and I sincerely hope that neither Mr. Buchanan nor Mr. Maxton ever sees a bird luncheon-party in the desert as they would be horrified to find how class distinction rules in the feathered world.

The first people to go in are the Golden and Imperial Eagles and they squat on the carcass, making a leisurely meal off all the choice cuts, whilst those below the salt squat in a circle some yards distant and watch their betters with class-complexed, hungry eyes, hoping that something will be left for them when the 'Great Ones' have finished. The circle of those who stand and wait is further divided up into social grades, for in the front rank are the Griffon or Black Vultures, behind them the small Egyptian variety, and in a vulgar and noisy mob at the back the 'lower ten thousand,' the Brown-Necked Ravens and Hooded Crows. These poor relations have a very slim chance of participating, as, if the vultures have not finished their meal by nightfall there is not much hope of the morrow, because during the

hours of darkness the hyænas and jackals arrive for their share and they are always very hungry.

Many years ago when we were passing through Kosseima on the Palestine frontier an Arab boy brought a young Golden Eagle to us and to save it from an uncertain fate we took charge of it, though, as we were on a seven-day trek in the cars, it was a great trial and responsibility. It was quite young and nothing more than a large ball of yellow downy fluff equipped at one end with a savage-looking hooked beak several sizes too large for it and a pair of very mature feet with long talons at the other end. From its appearance I should have said that it was ten or twelve days old, but its complete and utter helplessness belied this and gave the impression that it had but recently left the egg. It was apparently too weak even to open its beak and for its first mouthful at a meal my wife had to lift its head and open its mandibles, after which it would remain in this position punctuated by gulps so long as she would continue to stuff raw meat into the great cavity.

I was rather surprised to find a bird of the eagle tribe so completely weak and helpless and my suspicions were aroused two mornings later when I found very unmistakable evidence that the bird had been out of its basket and at the other end of the room. That night in the rest-house we dimmed the lamp, and sat without speaking or moving, and after ten minutes of complete silence the eaglet, which had been lying in its normal position of complete limpness, carefully raised its head and glared round the room with two hard yellow but very intelligent eyes. It was an uncanny sight to see this immature bird, who for three days had been adopting the pose of the very young and pathetically helpless fledgling with closed eyes, suddenly coming to life and staring at one with all the intense ferocity of the adult bird.



Then cautiously it raised one huge foot and gripped the edge of the basket with its claws ; it drew itself up on to the side, flopped heavily to the ground, and scuttled across the room with its small unfeathered wings raised. At this stage my wife turned the lamp up and immediately the eaglet dropped where it stood and became once more the helpless fledgling ! It is of course quite a usual form of self-protection on the part of small birds, particularly the plover and partridge species, to remain crouched and absolutely motionless, but this young eaglet went rather further than this and most definitely acted a part—that of pathetic helplessness—with consummate skill.

This Golden Eagle is now in the Cairo Zoological Gardens, but he is not a good specimen as when we presented him as a fledgling he was kept in a small closed basket for several weeks in which he could not raise his body ; the result of this carelessness is that both his wings are badly deformed and he cannot fold them properly. I may add that this disaster occurred before the days of Khadri Bey, the present very capable Director of the Gardens.

There are three varieties of vulture in the Egyptian and Palestine deserts, the well-known Griffon, the Black Vulture who wears a sort of Medici collar of feathers round his neck emphasising the fact that his head is bald, and the Egyptian Vulture, a much smaller bird with staring feathers at the back of his head suggesting unbrushed hair, and an almost unnecessarily long and cruelly-hooked beak. None of these species is particularly plentiful, but like the Royal Artillery and their motto '*Ubique*,' they are always present where they are required.

There is some mystery about the vulture and the sense that tells him where a meal is spread for him in the desert. In South Africa the theory is that he is circling always some

thousands of feet up in the blue dome of the sky and from this position with his remarkable powers of vision he has a view of an enormous expanse of country. This seems to be a reasonable explanation in South Africa, for whenever an animal drops in its tracks small circling specks immediately appear overhead, gradually becoming larger and larger till finally they flop to earth as huge lumbering *aasvogel*.

On several occasions in Egypt, however, I have seen vultures in large numbers flying towards a feast but so far away from it that there could be no question whatsoever of their either sighting it or scenting it. The clearest case of this was in connection with a camel that I saw just after it had died on the Darb el Haj about twenty miles west of Nekhl in Sinai. Its Arab owners were standing over it and beginning to shift its load to other animals as I arrived in my car. In attendance there were already a couple of Egyptian vultures and about half a dozen ravens squatting at a respectful distance.

I travelled on across the plain some ten miles to Sudr Heitan and then through the mountainous country of the Dar el Haj on the far side of which, in full view of Suez, I stopped for lunch. Shortly afterwards vultures of both the Griffon and Black varieties started to pass overhead in an almost constant stream, every one flying fairly low and very fast and heading due east for the camel lying on the road some twenty-five to thirty miles away.

Vultures are not a particularly common sight in Sinai and they are only in evidence when there is carrion about. Also, owing to the fact that there is not much camel-caravan traffic nowadays a dead animal in the desert is a fairly rare and not by any means a daily or weekly occurrence. It is therefore quite safe to assume that the big flock of vultures that passed over my head for about half an hour were

flying towards the dead camel I had seen and not to some other that had conveniently and coincidentally died at the same time in close proximity to my luncheon place.

If by any chance they had sighted it from the sky—and the ability to pick up a moderately small object like a camel at a distance of thirty miles is more than the most enthusiastic ornithologist would claim for a vulture—it seems reasonable to suppose that they would have flown to the spot at the height of several thousand feet and have then descended instead of coming down to only a hundred feet and beating against a head wind. Unless the vulture is gifted with a power of scent beyond anything we are able to imagine he must possess some sixth sense which we cannot understand that tells him of the presence of carrion.

Last of all the birds one comes to the Sparrow, who is not a desert inhabitant in the real sense of the word but, like the Germans and Italians, he is faced with an ever-increasing population and therefore is imbued with the idea of colonial expansion which causes him to emigrate to Beduin encampments and lonely police posts in the wastes beyond. Every Arab village swarms with sparrows and they are unlike our British sparrows because, instead of being smartly clad and well-turned-out, they are loosely-feathered, untidy, and look frowsy. The worst one can say of most birds is that their good points are outweighed by their wicked deeds and only a few come under this category ; in the case of the Egyptian and Palestinian sparrow one cannot put up the slightest defence, for he is a full hundred per cent pest and all his deeds are evil. He exists solely to raid gardens and corn-fields and when a rich feast of caterpillars or other insects is spread for him he refuses to touch them, for apparently he has a fellow-feeling for any other pest that ravages garden produce.

When the locust invasion came across Sinai and Southern Palestine in 1930 and all the birds of the desert rallied to assist the locust-fighting forces the sparrow showed up in his true colours as a Conscientious Objector and refused to strike a blow. While other and better birds were suffering from the pangs of acute indigestion through over-eating in the cause of humanity, the heedless sparrow went about his unlawful occasions and adopted that self-righteous attitude of 'Business as Usual' we all found so aggravating during the other 'Great War.'

#### A SALUTATION.

*O Night, it is a rich fate to have been  
Thy pool, thy priest, thy cat, thy fugitive,  
Gladdening at thy plover's cry, thy cradled moon,  
And the swift whistle of a black phalanx of wings,  
Fearing thy spectral trees and knuckly roots  
Which grasp the edges of the rank lagoon,  
Or with my lamp upon some clouded field  
So that my leg-shadows, like mighty shears,  
Hewed thy solid darkness. I have seen  
Thee like a temple arrayed, often have held  
Thy twinkling lights and all thy heavy years  
In my own bosom, and have drunk strength to live  
A hundred lives from thy deep spiritual springs.*

JOHN THOMPSON.

## *INDIA AGAIN.*

BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL HARRY LEWIN.

### I

#### CANTONMENTS AND RAJASTHAN.

WE are revisiting India. My wife left that country as a girl when her father, Lord Roberts, handed over the appointment of Commander-in-Chief of the Army and returned home to England after completing forty-one years' service in India, while I left it as a subaltern some years later on the outbreak of the South African War.

We have been staying at Meerut in the United Provinces with our son, who is serving there in the Army. It is intensely interesting to see again the people and surroundings we knew so well. 'The land of my adoption,' as Lord Roberts called it; and it certainly has received us as no new-comers, for since our arrival we have been honoured by a succession of Indian callers of many different grades and castes, who welcomed us with all the charm and courtliness for which the East is rightly famous.

Among their number came a fine, commanding old gentleman—a Mohamedan Nawab of considerable local standing. He is head of an Afghan family who have been settled in India, near Delhi, for three generations. They were originally Khans, of a district in Afghanistan, and, as is by no means uncommon in those parts, a blood-feud of old standing existed between them and a powerful neighbouring clan. When in 1838 the British Government moved an army to Kabul and placed their nominee, Shah Shooja, upon

the Afghan throne, the hostile clan threw in their lot with Dost Mahomed Khan, the opposing claimant to Shah Shooja, and consequently the family of our visitor promptly espoused the British point of view.

Their decision was, at the time, unfortunate for them, for in the subsequent defeat of the British forces and the flight of Shah Shooja, many of their clan, men, women and children, were massacred, and the remainder fled to India as penniless fugitives. Happily their devotion to the British cause was rewarded by the Indian Government by the award of the title Nawab, a money pension, and grant of land in the United Provinces.

Here again they showed their trust and belief in the British Raj, for on the outbreak of the Mutiny on 10th May, 1857, the nephew of the Nawab who had fled from Kabul risked his life to save that of the Commissioner of Meerut, Mr. Greathead, to the disadvantage of a bullet-wound in his thigh, which, however, did not deter him from daily service in the saddle with a squadron of horse which the Nawab raised among his relatives and followers and placed at the disposal of General Archdale Wilson commanding the column which marched from Meerut to besiege Delhi. During the siege and subsequent operations this small force of irregular cavalry rendered invaluable service. In the Afghan War of 1878-9 the family were again present with the British forces and served in various capacities under Lord Roberts, and accompanied him on his march from Kabul to Kandahar, where their local knowledge and experience was of inestimable advantage to the Intelligence branch of the Staff.

Again in the Great War no fewer than twenty-three members of the family took service, mostly in the Army, and served with marked distinction on all the fronts in which the Indian Army was engaged.

The Nawab who called on us—grandson of the first holder of the title—is a man of more than middle age, a commanding figure, spare and tall with white pointed beard. He wears Afghan dress with the conical cap, or 'kulla,' common to all Mohamedans, with tightly wound pugaree of 'putto' cloth. A shooting accident in the hip causes him to walk with a limp and to require the aid of a stout walking stick, which, however, the old gentleman, when at rest, handles more like a sword than a crutch. He was accompanied by his brother, a retired deputy collector of the Indian Civil Service—a very different figure. He speaks English perfectly and was dressed in the tweed suit of an English country gentleman, but wore the kulla and pugaree similar to that of his elder brother. It was interesting to note the demeanour of the younger to the elder, for despite his superior education and status as a senior Civil servant, his respect and deference to the head of the clan was quite marked. He interpreted the Nawab's remarks for our benefit and occasionally interpolated a comment or two of his own, but it was the Nawab who dominated the conversation, and, until he relapsed into silence and had had his say, the younger brother remained discreetly in the background.

In political views the Nawab may be described as tending essentially to the Right. He had no use for modern theories of universal suffrage, or too much freedom of speech. The purpose of a Government was, he held, to govern, and he brought the walking stick to 'the carry' and then 'the guard' to indicate that he would be prepared to take drastic action if authority was opposed. He was particularly definite in his indignation against the propaganda being put forward by a Hindu Congress now sitting in the adjacent town. Apparently a scurrilous pamphlet, which had obtained Government sanction in Bombay, was being broadcast.

This hurls abuse on all forms of government, and upon the Mohamedan faith in particular. The Nawab appealed to us to say why such outrages were permitted? He would allow no man to revile another's religion. (In passing, however, he let fall a remark or two referring to undesirables and slaves which included, we were given to understand, all those who were not of his faith and who dwelt south of the Punjab!) "No," he announced firmly, he would not allow such people to hold Congresses. They should feel the full rigour of the law—and the thick walking stick was again brought into play to demonstrate the correct functions of law and order.

Turning to more personal topics the Nawab asked for leave to bring his granddaughters next day to pay their respects to my wife, and when the hour of their call had been arranged, and detailed explanations given of their names, ages and accomplishments, the Nawab and his brother withdrew, with many protestations of their undying devotion to our family lineage, and us and our son, in particular.

Next morning the old gentleman was again with us, driving up in a tonga with his three granddaughters in attendance, all closely veiled in voluminous 'burkhas' of blue silk, as usually worn by Mohamedan ladies of rank.

Seeing them arrive thus veiled I hastily withdrew from our sitting-room, leaving my wife alone to receive the party. I was, however, speedily informed that my absence was quite uncalled for and it was hoped I would return as soon as possible. This I did and was introduced by the Nawab to three tall and graceful young ladies of charming appearance who looked the mere male frankly in the face without the smallest embarrassment. They were gorgeously appparelled in gowns of silk and velvet richly embroidered in gold. The eldest wore Afghan dress. The



second that of a Mughal princess—which the Nawab explained his family were entitled to wear—and the third wore the dress of a Punjab Mohamedan lady of to-day. They spoke English with quaint intonation. Their visit lasted about half an hour and was interesting as showing the trend of thought among young Mohamedan ladies in India to-day.

Another of our visitors has been an old Indian officer, now retired and living some thirty miles from Meerut, who had been one of the four bodyguard orderlies to Lord Roberts in the South African War. Hearing we were here the old gentleman got into his uniform with belt and sword complete, and put himself and two grandsons into one of the innumerable motor-buses which now ply along the trunk roads in India and came to welcome us back. His entry, with the hilt of his sword thrust forward to us to touch, in token that he and his arms were ours to serve, was in accordance with time-honoured custom of the martial races. His grandsons were introduced and saluted, and then Saleh Singh—for that was the old warrior's name—turned and gazed at my wife, gazed intently and then spoke. 'Yes, yes, that is the Miss Sahib who I guarded at Bloemfontein, at Pretoria, when the Lard Sahib—Lard Rabaarts led the Army, and we—we of his people, had the honour to serve him. Of a certainty it is the Miss Sahib—and this is her son.' And then we settled down to rehearse all the forgotten incidents of the South African War, every word and almost every movement of the Jung-I-Laht Sahib (Commander-in-Chief) being remembered and treasured with amazing fidelity. The two grandsons are to follow the only proper calling for all good people—the Army—and God being good, they shall rise to rank and honour in the service of the Sirkar. As we talked he slowly produced from his breast pocket a watch which he

held forward in both hands. 'Read,' he said, 'read the writing,' and he drew attention to an engraved inscription on the back of the watch, which ran : 'Presented by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts to Duffadar Saleh Singh 14 Bengal Lancers in gratitude for his faithful and unwearying service as personal orderly throughout the South African Campaign—1900.' The old gentleman would hardly let the watch leave his hands as I slowly deciphered the inscription, and when I had read it aloud he again clasped the watch in both hands and reconstituted it to a small bag which he placed with reverence in his breast pocket and carefully buttoned over the pocket flap.

He then stood in salute and asked had he leave to go ? Again the sword hilt was advanced and again touched, and he moved slowly backwards to the door preceded by his grandsons, and there on the threshold he again saluted with protestations of his devotion to us all and took his leave. A fine type of the Indian officer and gentleman. The memory of such men and of the long British association in service with them was a stimulating and happy remembrance of his visit.

Certainly among the classes we have been meeting, India of to-day is but little changed. There is the same courtesy and good breeding. The same simple trust and belief in the integrity of the British race. The same family pride in their service to, and their association with, the British Raj. The same marvellous veneration towards the King Emperor—the Power so few of them have ever seen.

No, thank heaven, the spirit of our old friends still lives even if it is not apparent in the pronouncements of the political spokesmen and the daily Press of India of to-day.

While at Meerut we received a warm-hearted invitation to visit one of the Indian States of Rajputana. In order to see more of the country and people we decided to travel by motor-car, in preference to the railway, and, despite the often primitive condition of the roads, I would always recommend a visitor to adopt this method for journeys which can be accomplished within the span of a cold-weather day.

Naturally a motor journey in India is different to one at home. In most cases one is fortunate if there is a strip of macadam roadway running down the centre of the broad track which is called a road. It is then termed a 'pukka' road and we consider ourselves lucky that the Public Works Department of India has decided that the route we are following is of sufficient importance to demand something more than Irish bridges over the intervening nullahs or dry-water courses, and a bridge of boats over any rivers that may happen to cross our path. With the ribband of macadam roadway along our route we made good progress. In India, one's speed is not so much regulated by the volume of traffic on the road, as by the eccentricities of those who use it. The two main classes one meets are the motor-omnibuses and the ox-drawn carts. The former are weird contraptions, generally in the last stages of decay, and always grossly overloaded with humans as well as baggage. Arms, legs, elbows and feet protrude from every window and door, while they ply along at a round speed, often over thirty miles per hour, swaying from side to side, the driver, usually a small and insignificant little man, squeezed casually in with a hoard of passengers sharing the driving-seat with him. How he has room or power to manipulate his wheel, brakes, or gears is an unsolved mystery. More often than not we are inclined to believe he controls none of them, judging by

the erratic progress of his vehicle. As we approach, watching its variations from one side of the macadamed track to the other, we are in permanent doubt as to whether we should stick to the accepted rule of the road and steer to the left, or, for safety's sake, go straight towards the ditch on the left, and halt while the Juggernaut lurches wildly past. Usually we split the difference, and drop to third gear while clearing off the macadam on to the unmetalled track on the left. No sooner have we done this than the motor-bus, which up to the last moment had appeared solely intent on ramming tactics, full steam ahead, changes course, swerves wildly to the left, careers off the macadam and swirls round on the right, spouting high in air whirlwinds of dust, enveloping and blinding us. We hastily apply our brakes and pull up waiting for the storm to be overpast, and fearful of heading into disaster. At length we can see a few yards and cautiously resume our way. The bus has passed behind us in a wall of dust, and for fifty yards or more neither of us have had the smallest advantage from the macadam track, for both of us, from different motives, have shunned its course.

The ox-wagons impede us by different methods. They generally move in strings of three or four, following one another leisurely down the road. No sooner do they start upon their journey than in most instances each driver wraps his head in his mantle or blanket, and resigns himself to the deepest slumber, while the mild-eyed, silver-grey coloured humped oxen proceed at their own measured pace down the centre of the pukka road. As we approach we sound our horn in the hope that the oncoming carts will give us room upon the causeway—vain hope. The drivers remain wrapped in sleep, and the bullocks pursue their course unheeding. There is nothing for it but to plunge to the

left into the dusty side-track. As we do so, the placid pair of oxen become aware of our approach and lurch slowly away to the opposite side. We are thankful for small mercies, for this slight change of direction enables us to keep our off wheels on the macadam and thus avoid the full measure of the side-track dust and wheel-ruts. Lucky are we if circumstances continue to drift in these conditions, but fate as often as not turns their course through the sudden awakening of the slumbering driver. The sleeping huddled bundle suddenly springs to life, and his attention is riveted by the fact that his oxen are digressing towards the side-ditch without his becoming aware of the reason, in the form of our motor-car confronting them. His hastily aroused and limited intelligence permits him only to apply the age-old remedy of a hurried twist to the oxens' tails, turning them sharply back to mid-road and towards us. Luckily, however, early experience has warned us of this idiosyncrasy, and we had kept well away to the near side, thus avoiding collision.

We journey thus mile after mile across a flat plain, irrigated by numerous wells, with oxen drawing water either by means of Persian wheels, or more usually a large leather bag suspended by a rope running over a wheel down into the well. This is drawn to the surface by two oxen yoked to the end of the rope and working down an inclined plane which thus gives increased weight to their draft.

The crops are mostly sugar-cane, with patches of vivid green barley and lucerne. There is a never-ending company of wayfarers upon the road, most of whom are carrying upon head or shoulders what are probably all their worldly goods. Occasionally, one more opulent than the rest, will be riding a small pony, while his wife or servant follows bearing the baggage and bedding of the party. 'I met a hundred men

upon the road to Delhi—and all of them were my brothers,’ is an Indian proverb, and certainly the goodwill and friendliness of these brethren of the road, one to another, is remarkable. Usually a line of trees on either side, planted wide on the limits of the road, afford shelter from the sun to the traveller. After about fifty miles the country becomes more barren. Rough rocky hills begin to rise to right and left. The number of wayfarers decreases. We cross a broad nullah with high banks, the road descending through a winding gorge. On the far side we cross the boundary into the Indian state, and the country becomes wilder every mile. The hills close in upon the road which begins to wind among them and to rise and fall as it crosses over spurs and descends into interlying valleys. Small forts with crenellated battlements begin to crown the more commanding hill tops. Gradually these grow larger as we approach the capital, and are surrounded by lines of loop-holed walls running along the highest contours. The central buildings of these fortifications become large baronial castles, the seats of baronial chiefs—for we are now in feudal territory, the barons or ‘thakurs’ holding their lands by right of service rendered to their overlord, the reigning Prince of the State. The road is good going and winds up through gorges and over rocky plains until we arrive at the gates of an almost deserted town of palaces, perched on either side of a precipitous valley. Each building is surrounded by high crenellated walls encircling gardens and ornamental water-tanks. Their architecture is of the delicate and beautiful Rajput style. Graceful domes and ‘chhatris’—smaller domes, placed at the corners of a building, and supported solely by four delicately fluted pillars.—The domes rise from the flat roofs of one-storied buildings, the more important of which are largely built of white marble, often beautifully embel-

lished with inlaid borders of great refinement and taste. We pursue our way through a narrow street bordered by these enchanting buildings until we arrive at the opposite gate of the city walls and issue into a plain dotted with gardens and trees, looking green and cool, in the dazzling sunlight. Crossing this for a couple of miles we enter through the gates of the new city, a walled town, the interior laid out in geometrical squares, with streets fifty yards wide running at right angles to each other. The houses on either side, three or four storeys high, form a uniform façade in shades of rose pink, so that the vista that meets our eye is imposing and colourful. Shops of every conceivable oriental variety form the ground story, mere box-like rabbit holes opening on to the street. A swarm of humanity is busy with an infinite variety of industries, cloth-workers, dyers, brass-workers, jewellers, silk merchants, grain dealers, sweetmeat sellers and food purveyors. Bullock-carts, pack-mules and donkeys, ekkas, tongas, fakirs and mendicants throng the streets. We have our work cut out to thread our way through the throng to the accompaniment of a liberal obligato from our horn and electric syren. At last we reach the opposite city gate and are again in the country. A short two miles brings us to our host's house, and we swing in under a cream-coloured gateway, domed and 'chhattriéd' as all such Rajput gates are, into a charming English garden of lawns and walks, ablaze on all sides with poinsettias, cannas and bougainvillæa.

The house, raised on a wide terrace, is a perfect example of Rajput architecture, some two hundred years old, brought up to date in excellent taste, without disturbing the charm and character of the building. Built originally as the hunting-box of one of the Princes, it fell out of favour for such purposes many years ago, and has passed through

various vicissitudes since, until its present tenant took it in hand and evolved the charming home which met our eyes. A delightful ending to a fascinating motor journey.

Last night a delightful company came to dinner. Among them a Rajput nobleman or 'thakur,' who has lately retired from the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Maharajah's army. A grand old soldier and gentleman, he is a kinsman of the famous General Sir Pretab Singh, by whom he had been brought up, and under whom he had fought in China in the time of the Boxer rebellion, and in France in 1914. He spoke English perfectly and is an earnest student of English affairs and literature. His conversation was most easy and interesting, with a delightful sense of humour. His admiration and regard for his patron and guardian, Sir Pretab, is unbounded, although it was not until he came to years of discretion that he fully appreciated the advantages of his position. 'There was more of his riding whip in his curriculum than I appreciated when young,' he explained with a laugh, 'and he never spared any of us! If we failed, we knew what we were in for, but he made men of us and we all thank him.' He told us a delightful anecdote of a relation of his, the ruler of a neighbouring Rajput State, who, when approached by a leader of the Congress Party to know if he might visit the Maharajah and his State to lay his views before his people and make the 'aspirations of the Indian people' known to them, most courteously replied that he would be charmed to receive the leader and to have the pleasure of making his acquaintance. He would, in fact, give orders that he was to be regarded as a State guest during his stay, and was even prepared to extend his hospitality for a period of four or five years should the distinguished speaker feel that his State was worthy of a visit. Despite



the warm terms in which this courteous invitation was couched, there had never been any response on the part of the leader of 'national thought,' yet we were assured the Maharajah's warm welcome is still open to him !

We gathered that the views of Congress had made no great headway in Rajputana. To the vast majority of the population, the timely advent of the monsoon, combined with a possible reduction of land revenue, still remains their chief interest.

The old General, in his Rajput dress, his pugaree tied in the well-known Rajput style, running low on the left of the face and sweeping up to a rakish cock on the right side, his white jodhpur breeches with black coat buttoned close round the throat is a distinguished figure to see and a delightful companion to meet—a Rathore nobleman to his fingertips. No wonder the Afghan and Mughal emperors found Rajputana a hard nut to crack and left it to be consolidated by others ! Rajputana is certainly a country to see. Its system of government is undoubtedly 'feudal,' not to say autocratic, which would assuredly shock all 'Liberal,' 'Advanced' and 'Left' schools of thought in England. But there is a spirit of clanship and brotherhood from highest to the lowest which many, under more advanced forms of rule, might well follow.

However that may be, Rajputana is the land of India's aristocracy, of feudal romance and chivalry. As Todd in his classic work on RAJASTHAN wrote many years ago—'There is not a petty State in Rajasthan which has not had its Thermopylæ, and hardly a city which has not produced its Leonidas.' Such are the Rajputs. A race of gentlemen and sportsmen, who have rendered yeoman service on innumerable occasions to their King Emperor, and Feudal Lords.

[*The North-West Frontier Province will be published in November.*]

## THE BADGER.

*A shadow is stealing through the wood  
 Where the wild things find their livelihood :  
     Where the ivy creeps,  
     And the bluebell steeps  
     The air in fragrance,  
     And rusty heaps  
 Of last year's leaves are a rustling dread  
 Of betraying sound to the wild things' tread.*

*There's a sudden chill in the dawning air  
 And the badger sniffs as he nears his lair ;  
     His lip turns back  
     As he winds the track  
     Of a prowling poacher  
     With bulging sack :  
 Bulging with rabbits that cost him nought  
 But a night of sleep—and a world of thought !*

*The ruffling rooster hails the day ;  
 The fox glides home with his limp-necked prey,  
     And the world awakes.  
     The badger shakes  
     His dew-wet coat,  
     And sedately takes  
 His homeward path through the pearly haze,  
 As it melts to gold in the sun's first rays.*

ANGELA HENDERSON.

## GARDENIA.

BY P. Y. BETTS.

OLIVER MARGRAVE took a sip of cognac, rolled it round his tongue, savoured it, swallowed it, and sighed—as he might well sigh, for it was Grande Fine Champagne 1858, from a last precious bottle opened, as it appeared, in my honour, for all that I was an undistinguished student unknown to him a week before. Then he set his liqueur glass down on the walnut coffee-table between us, leant back in his chair and over the pointed arch of his finger-tips, which met precisely, he looked at me. He nodded once or twice, reflectively.

‘So you are the nephew of the divine Rosalba?’ he said at last.

‘Her great-nephew,’ I corrected him.

He shrugged his shoulders deprecatingly.

“Eheu! fugaces . . .” he murmured, stretching out a fine hand towards his cognac.

This remark was so perfectly in character that it put me finally at my ease, exactly dovetailing as it did with those other glimpses of the old gentleman’s personality as revealed to me during the course of this evening’s excellent dinner. The brocaded smoking-jacket, the neatly pointed imperial, the vintage brandy, and now the Odes of Horace—all these were surely the hall-marks of that rare survival in our time, a gentleman of the old school. I was interested to meet at last one of the products of that unrepeatable conjunction of *fin de siècle*, a classical education, and a safe 5 per cent minimum on inherited investments, and I admired his exquisite

manners with their lavender-hued ninetyish bloom still upon them. I had been somehow flattered when as the result of a few minutes' casual talk together at the Valloncours' reception the other evening I had received the next day an invitation to dine with him to-night at his home in the avenue Victor Hugo—flattered in spite of myself, charmed willy-nilly by his antique courtliness while recognising it as the flower of a mental attitude and mode of life that in theory I derided.

By name he had not been completely unknown to me, for though by no means a celebrity he had a certain reputation as a music critic and a writer on the fine arts. His essays, of which I happened to have read one or two, were scholarly, urbane and unexceptionable, with a faint odour of pot-pourri hanging about them, giving the impression that he had never really got over Cézanne. As I learnt afterwards, he was also something of a figure in the cultivated and somewhat embalmed sections of Parisian society in which he moved, where he was looked upon as an established dilettante and where his exquisite little dinners, backed up by a classic cellar, were quite a feature. It was therefore natural that he should be present at the Valloncours' musical reception, at which two or three times a year there was given by the most accomplished performers chamber music of the first quality. Some friends of mine, the Van Doons, who were connected with the American summer school of music at Fontainebleau and knew the Valloncours well, had brought me along that evening, and they had pointed out to me Oliver Margrave, who was at the moment in conversation with Madame Valloncourt and Casimir Broucque, the violinist. I had already noticed Margrave, for with his fine head, neat white pointed beard and slight figure, he was extremely elegant and almost

dandified in appearance—but for the beard, it had occurred to me, not unlike Sargent's portrait of Coventry Patmore. Presently I was introduced to him, and it happened that the talk turned, discreetly, on the comparative merits of two rival *prime donne* who were among the guests. Margrave had gently disposed of both, relegating them to the third rank of singers, but I was inclined to champion one of them, citing her recent performance in *Der Freischütz*. It was then that Margrave, with the most delicate and indulgent of gestures, as of one who had been in Arcady, remarked :

‘ Ah, but then you never heard Rosalba sing . . . ’

‘ Rosalba ? ’ At the name, Janet Van Doon, who had introduced me to Margrave, turned to him with a smile. ‘ I must warn you, Mr. Margrave, that there's nothing about the Rosalba legend that Mr. Glaive won't know already—he happens to be her nephew or something, so you must go carefully on facts. Isn't that so, Peter ? ’ she appealed to me.

‘ Only as far as family details are concerned, ’ I pointed out. ‘ Rosalba's professional triumphs were a bit before my time. ’ After all, she was simply Great-aunt Rosie to me and always had been ; it was therefore not altogether easy for me to associate her with that legendary nineteenth-century Rosalba who, from all accounts, seemed to have combined in her person the best attributes of a Lily Langtry, a Bernhardt and a Jenny Lind. There was no doubt that she must have been a beautiful woman of charming personality and great talent who, had she been born fifty years later, would have become a film star of the first magnitude, but I had known her far too long as Great-aunt Rosie to think romantically about her. I imagine that in the fullness of time the third generation of Garbos will feel much the same about Great-aunt Greta—it can hardly be otherwise.

As it happened, however, I was not then called on to embark upon the topic of my famous great-aunt, for at that moment people began to take their places for the performance of a Mozart clarinet quintet. Directly this was over I made my excuses and left—for I had arranged to meet some friends at the Papillon d'Or at midnight—so I had no further talk with old Margrave that evening and indeed never gave him another thought till his courteous note arrived the next day inviting me to dine with him one night the following week. Slightly flattered, as I have said, and slightly curious, I had accepted his invitation. The dinner had been choice, enhanced by wines that even to my uncouth palate were exquisite, and our conversation throughout the meal had been easy but impersonal. Oliver Margrave knew from the Valloncourts that I was in Paris to study painting, and from this point the conversation ranged naturally outward over the fields of French art. It was not till dinner was over and we were warming our hearts at his heavenly brandy that his mention of the 'divine Rosalba' sounded the first personal note of the evening. The great drawing-room was dim except for the golden circle of lamplight where we sat near the open window, beyond which the tender autumn night was brimming Paris up with blue.

"Eheu! fugaces labuntur anni," the old man murmured, in the tone of luxurious melancholy in which my elders habitually refer to that fabulous golden age, the-days-before-the-war. It seems to have been a perfectly marvellous world up'till the time when I was born into it—so my elders assure me. I am obliged to take their word for it, but I sometimes wish they did not find it necessary to speak of the pre-war era in that never-never kind of voice, as if life had ceased to be worth living while I was still in

petticoats. Detecting this special forty-years-back note in my host's voice I guessed that I was in for a bout of nostalgic reminiscence and glanced surreptitiously at the clock, for I was meeting a girl at eleven-thirty. But there was plenty of time, and since the excellent dinner had put me in mellow good humour I settled down tolerantly enough to drink the old gentleman's brandy and annotate yet another disquisition on those grand Edwardian days when I was still a peevish and unfulfilled spermatozoon.

'Rosalba is my grandmother's half-sister,' I explained. 'You see, she had an Italian mother and an Irish father, who after his first wife's death married again, this time an Englishwoman. My grandmother belongs to this second family. There were no other children except Rosalba by the first marriage, and she and my grandmother were brought up together and always remained good friends in spite of unlike temperaments and the quite different kind of lives they led after they grew up. For Rosalba quarrelled with my great-grandfather—they were both pretty fiery-tempered people—and ran away from home and lived *à la* Murger, an unheard-of thing for a girl to do in those days, and after a sort of Grace Moore Odyssey, singing in Continental cafés and so on, she was taken up by Lazzarini the impresario and eventually made a big name for herself as a singer; whereas my grandmother stayed at home like a sweet little English miss and presently married my grandfather and brought up a nice steady ordinary English family, of which my mother was one. When Rosalba was in England she often used to stay with Granny, so naturally I got to know her quite well, though of course she was already long past her hey-day by then and had gone into retirement years before. As a matter of fact I've never in my life heard her sing, but from all accounts she was a world-beater.'

‘A world-beater. A world-beater.’ Margrave smiled, repeating the word almost dreamily, as if it tickled his fancy. ‘That perhaps would be your modern way of putting it—I should rather say she was a world-enchanter. Rosalba . . . I think she must have been the loveliest woman in the world, and she had a voice that could have charmed the gates of heaven open—the very ‘gates of heaven,’ he said again, in a quiet voice that somehow made the extravagant words believable. Put down in cold type they may look ridiculous, but as he uttered them they were dignified by a perfect sincerity. Almost against my will, my heart warmed a little towards this old man. I saw him clearly enough for what he was, a mannered old romantic, backward-looking, out of touch with reality, no longer a channel through which the hot life flowed, and yet my heart warmed to him. I lifted my glass again to my lips and the lovely night outside brimmed up with blue like a bowl of darkness.

‘Tell me about Rosalba,’ I invited.

He was silent for a moment amongst his hoarded dreams, brooding over their secret and antique brightness.

‘There is not much to tell,’ he replied at last, ‘except that I loved Rosalba with my whole heart and that I never possessed her. No doubt that will seem a poor sort of tale to you, who are one of a generation that is said to account possession to be nine-tenths of the law of love’ (and he smiled across at me indulgently enough) ‘but for me there are certain compensations. Whether these compensations seem as real to you as they are to me depends, of course, upon whether you believe, as I do, that a graceful gesture is the most significant thing in life—that gestures, in fact, plot the outline of a man’s entire design of living. I am not one of those who believe, in the Wordsworthian manner, that the measure of a man can be taken from his little name-



less unremembered acts—I say it is the single gesture that sets the standard of ideal human conduct. Sir Walter Raleigh spreading his cloak in the mud, Sir Philip Sidney offering the cup of water at Zutphen, Oates going out into the snow to die, Thomas Cranmer thrusting his right hand first into the flames——’

‘I think I see what you mean,’ I interrupted him; ‘according to your idea, gestures are the high-spots, the peaks that hint at the height of the superman to come?’

‘Exactly. The best of a man’s life—and even if unremembered or unremembered, still the best, the high-water mark. If you understand this, you will not perhaps find my brief tale completely insignificant.

‘I was a young man then, about as old as you are now, for this was forty-five years ago or as near as makes no matter. Forty-five years ago, in the gay nineties we still hear so much about—I suppose it all seems very remote and historic to you now and as unreal as the Waterloo ball, but believe me it was real enough once, it was pure life to me in the days when I was your age. Oh, it is hard for a young man to understand that there was ever real life before it flowed through him, or that there will ever be a time when the main stream of life will flow through him no longer but through others who will be young after him—one day you will understand this, if you live to be old, but now you cannot properly understand it. I know: your mind accepts it, yes, but in your heart, as in the heart of all young men in all times, there is the conviction that *you* can never be old and that it was first with *you* that life began to be . . .

‘I was a young man then, just down from Oxford, rather poor and quite unknown but determined that one day I would be a great writer. I had published a small book of

poems while I was at Oxford and now that I was in London I eked out my allowance by doing dramatic criticism and reviews, when I could get them. I was a romantic young man, with romantic ideas about women. Women were half-divine to me, the very stuff of poetry, not flesh and blood ; and Rosalba was my particular goddess. Whenever I could afford it I would go to the Opera to see her and to listen to her heavenly singing voice. Unlike many of my contemporaries, I never so much as sent her a bunch of flowers or a valentine. Sometimes I would hang about outside the stage-door to watch her as she left the opera-house, and that was the extent of my gallantry. She seemed so divine to me that I was content to worship her in obscurity. For I was a romantic young man and she was divinely beautiful, too beautiful by far for my possessing. I never dreamed that I might ever really have the joy of dancing with her in my arms. Yet it happened.

‘It was at a dance in Grosvenor Square. I didn’t know my hostess very well, in fact I shouldn’t be surprised, looking back on it, if I had only been asked as a make-weight because some more notable young man had failed. But my social credentials were adequate and I had known the lady’s nephew at Magdalen, so I suppose I was accounted fit to take my place among the smaller fry of her guests. And at the other end of the scale amongst those present was the divine Rosalba.

‘As luck or fate would have it, I was standing making small-talk with my hostess when Rosalba came into the room. Now in those ampler days, as you may know, it was still the custom to exchange compliments with one’s host or hostess on one’s arrival and departure, so it happened that directly she entered the room Rosalba, with a small retinue of adorers, hangers-on and I don’t know what, made

her way to where we were standing at the end of the long ballroom. I remember now the exquisite pang of amazement and joy that shot through me when I raised my eyes and saw her coming down the room towards us. She was in white, I suppose it was white satin. That was in the days when women wore their dresses low and their shoulders were bare. Rosalba had a fair skin, a creamy skin without a shade of olive or a blush of red upon it—a skin like milk, but her eyes were true Italian eyes, deep as night. She had quite black hair. She was perfectly beautiful, a lovely woman in her prime, and yet she had a gentle look most rare in lovely women.

‘It’s strange—I remember everything else about her, but I never remember how it happened that I was actually introduced to her. Very likely I stood there spell-bound at my hostess’s elbow till I had to be introduced for form’s sake. I can’t remember. I must have had the wits to observe the usual formalities and ask her for the honour of a dance, for presently she was dancing with me ; but I can’t really remember. I only remember the wonder and the strangeness of that moment when with my arm around her and her hand in my hand we stood waiting for the opening beat of the waltz, and how she smiled into my eyes. And I remember the warm air between us scented in waves by the gardenia I was wearing in my lapel—that queer, vivid perfume, so sweet that it is almost acrid, almost a green perfume, like the scent of sap. It is well for me that I remember all that, for if I remembered only what we said there would be little indeed to remember of that unique waltz with Rosalba. There was so much in my heart to say that I was dumb. I was in no mood to chat about the floor and the band and the London season, and too young and serious to be gallant lightly. So I was silent.

‘I remember it now, the wonderful swirl and lightness of that waltz and the lightness of Rosalba in my arms. She was intensely desirable to me, yet somehow too holy to be thought of in terms of desire. It is difficult to explain to one of your generation, you must simply take my word for it that romantic young men used to be like that. She was a famous *prima donna*, beautiful, sought after, rich, while I was a penniless poet, fifteen years younger than she was, unknown, and shy—why, everything divided us. She was not to be thought of in terms of common desire, she was on a pedestal far beyond the reach of hands. There was nothing to say to her, so I said nothing. We danced in silence.

‘And then, just before the waltz ended, she spoke to me.

‘“How very sweet your gardenia smells,” she said.

‘“Do you like gardenias?” I stammered.

‘“Why, yes, they are almost my favourite flower,” she said, and the music stopped. We stood facing one another in the middle of the ballroom. I knew she must soon leave me, perhaps I should never speak to her again. I wanted so much to keep her with me a moment longer. My hand went up to my buttonhole and I took out the gardenia.

‘“Please,” I said, and handed it to her. She smiled at me. She lifted the flower to her nostrils, her lips brushed it. And then she put out her hand and slipped the flower back again in my buttonhole and gave the lapel a final gentle pat.

‘“It looks better against the black of your coat,” she said, “and it will be cooler there. Flowers always die on me, I can never wear them. But thank you so much,” she said, and her eyes smiled at me once more.

‘And then a mustachioed French marquis came up and claimed her company with a flourish of bows and I was left

alone. Of course I never danced with her again. The evening was over for me—but what an evening, for a romantic young man !

‘ I knew she was beyond my reach for ever, but still there was one thing that it was within my power to do for her. I went the next morning to the most exquisite florist’s in London and said that every day until I cancelled the order there were to be sent to Rosalba’s address the three whitest, loveliest, most flawless gardenias that could be found. They were to be arranged starwise, on a bed of velvety moss, and they were to be sent without card or message or any sign whatever of the sender . . .

‘ They nearly ruined me, those gardenias. I won’t tell you what they cost. It must be remembered that I was quite a poor young man, an unknown writer with very little money of my own. I pinched and slaved, I moved to cheaper rooms, I ate at smaller and obscurer restaurants, I let old clothes go unreplaced—anything so that I could still continue to send the divine Rosalba those white exotic flowers she loved. Every day for two or three months I sent her anonymously her three gardenias, and then she went abroad again, to America I think, and my costly homage came to an end, for now there was no more that I could do for her. I thought of her very often, but it was years before I saw Rosalba again.

‘ One cannot remain for ever a romantic young man. The years piled up, I abandoned poetry for criticism, the world’s slow stain spread slowly over me. I inherited money and ceased to be a poor young man, I attained a certain reputation as a critic. Little by little, inevitably, I lost my romantic ideas about women as I found out that women were made as much of flesh and blood as of the stuff of poetry. Imperceptibly, the child of light grew up

to be a child of this world—in other words, I became middle-aged. I came to look back with almost a smile upon my youthful folly and extravagance in sending Rosalba those gardenias, yet somehow I was always glad I had sent them, for in spite of the sophistication and experience that I had learnt with the years, Rosalba still occupied a special niche in my memory, apart from all other women in the world. She lived immortally in this romantic sanctuary, the divine Rosalba, not made of flesh and blood as other women were.

‘It was nearly thirty years before I saw her again. It was in Cannes. I was a man of fifty then, and she—she must have been sixty-five, as old as I am now ; yet I knew her at once. There was something about Rosalba that you could not forget, a quality of beauty that even old age could not destroy. It was not that she looked like a young woman—there was nothing of Fanny Ward about Rosalba. She created no illusion of youth, but there was that about her which made reality seem beautiful. I can’t explain that quality of hers ; but perhaps you know it already.

‘We were staying at the same hotel, we became acquainted—you know how it is, good morning and good evening, and presently a chance encounter in the town and then casual hotel conversation. However it was, we became acquainted. I never troubled to say that we had once, long ago, been formally introduced to one another, because I was sure that she would never remember the shy twenty-two-year-old who had offered her his gardenia after a single dumb waltz with her thirty years before. Now, my blood had cooled and she was already old, but still I took great pleasure in her company. Sometimes after dinner we would sit on the terrace and talk together or be silent, watching the blue night deepen and the lights on the *Iles de Lérins*

brighten across the bay. Unlike many great singers, she had a most lovely speaking voice.

‘One night while we were sitting there a young honeymooning couple who were staying in the hotel paused in their stroll through the garden below us to look at a glow-worm shining there. We could see the pallor of the girl’s white dress as she stooped to admire the little insect, and could hear the happy note in her voice as she drew the attention of her young husband to her discovery. Presently they strolled on again, arm in arm, while we from the terrace watched them go. And Rosalba laughed, her deep, rich laugh.

“‘I expect they’ll remember that glowworm all their lives, don’t you?’” she said. “Bless them. It’s always the little things like that that you remember when you’re old. You may forget the big things, but the little things, the glowworms of this life, you always remember.”

““Then you are a romantic,” I said, laughing. “And may I ask what glowworms you remember particularly?”

““One, especially,” she said. “I’ll tell you about it if you like, it will give you an idea of what I mean by a little thing that you always remember . . . As you can imagine, a *prima donna* never lacks flowers. Her dressing-room bulges with bouquets, orchids become a commonplace, in fact during the Covent Garden season you can say it is one person’s whole-time occupation to deal with the flowers that are showered upon a popular Mimi or Brünnhilde. And always they are accompanied by gallant messages, visiting-cards, protestations of admiration written upon coroneted note-paper—I tell you, I wearied of flowers. I remember none of those bouquets or the names of the men who sent them, and the only flowers I really remember were sent by a boy too shy to sign his name.

“He was a boy,” she said, “that I met one night years ago at a dance in London. I don’t remember his name, if I ever knew it. We had one waltz together and all I remember saying to him was that I loved gardenias. I never saw him again. But the next day, and every day after until I left England, three perfect gardenias were delivered at my house without any sign of where they had come from. At first I wondered who had sent them, it was not for a week or two that I remembered this boy . . . I thought it was sweet, sweet. I’ve always remembered that romantic boy’s anonymous gardenias, long after I’ve forgotten all the bouquets . . .” she said.

‘She left for Rapallo the next day, and I’ve never seen her since, the divine Rosalba.’

Oliver Margrave drained his glass of cognac and was silent. I looked at him across the lamplight—this elegant old dilettante with his brocaded smoking-jacket and white pointed beard, this elderly romantic still listening to the harp-like note of youth’s secret music echoing on—I looked at him across the years that divided us with as much sympathy as if I were looking at myself grown old.

‘Then you didn’t tell her?’

He shook his head, slowly, reminiscently.

‘No, I never told her. To remain silent then, not to brush the bloom off that memory of hers by revealing that lost romantic young man as a cynical quinquagenarian—that was my graceful gesture, the single act by which I would wish to be remembered, if I were to be remembered at all. But if you do not happen to be of my way of thinking about the importance of a gesture, then of course this little tale can mean nothing to you,’ concluded Margrave, with the slightest shrug.



'On the contrary, it means very much to me,' I assured him gently. I shall never forget the look of gratitude he gave me, as a father might give to a man who had done a kindness to a child of his. For a moment, in a panic of embarrassment and pity, I thought that he might be going to produce for my edification from some secret reliquary of sandalwood or ivory the withered, brown, husk-like remains of a forty-five-year-old gardenia ; but the moment passed . . .

Two or three months later, walking down Piccadilly relishing the different, homely atmosphere of London after an absence from it of more than a year, I noticed in a florist's window a sumptuous basket of white gardenias. Bedded on deep green moss, they shone forth from their gilded and beribboned nest with that miraculous air of candid yet virginal sophistication only to be met with in gardenias and a certain kind of *débutante*, the kind that is usually withdrawn from circulation after a single season. They were flawless. Looking at them through the plate-glass, I twitched in anticipation of their demure about it if you please. A little bell rang suddenly in my mind. As you can imagine of Wenceslas-like prodigality (for Ch. Her dressing-room bulking) I decided to buy them, basket and all, personally, that very evening, to you in across the way. How pleased she will be, I thought, dear as if I were. I am spending my money like this on an *Mimosa* you an of eighty, with the Windmill just round the corner. But I was genuinely fond of my Aunt Rosie, so I went into the shop and bought the gardenias in their elegant basket. They cost me five guineas, I remember.

My great-aunt lived in Surrey, about twenty hours out of Town, and was just sitting down to dinner by herself when

I arrived. She seemed delighted to see me. I left the gardenias in the lobby till after the meal, thinking that they might be a bit too much on an empty stomach, and only presented them to her when we were in the drawing-room with our coffee.

‘Peter! Gardenias?’ she exclaimed. ‘Why, this is like old times. . . . But it must have cost you a fortune, a great basket like this—you shouldn’t, you know, you silly, generous boy. Come and let me give you a kiss.’ (Although she was so old, it was quite a pleasure to be kissed by Great-aunt Rosie, she was such a fresh and sweet old lady still.) She turned the basket round, admiring the starry flowers from every angle. Yet somehow her pleasure in the gift itself, unlike her touching gratefulness to me, struck me as being less real than formal. I was faintly disappointed. I had expected raptures.

‘I hope you like them,’ I said. ‘I heard they were your favourite flower.’

‘They are very beautiful. It was sweet of you to think of bringing them for me. They are really lovely.’

‘But not your favourite flower?’ I persisted.

She had too much true tact to be hypocritical with me.

‘Well, my dear,’ she said, ‘I don’t know whether you agree with me, but my idea of a favourite flower is a flower you are happy to have about you at any time and can never weary of. I can’t say that of gardenias as I can of some of the common-or-garden flowers like daffodils and lilac and delphiniums. Now and again, for special occasions—like to-night, with you just back from months and months abroad—now and again gardenias are perfectly suitable, one can revel in them. But not every day. That wonderful perfume soon cloyes and becomes a burden. No, I can’t say that gardenias, lovely as they are, are my favourite

flowers,' she said. She set the exotic basket by itself on a table rather far from where we were sitting, I observed.

'As a matter of fact,' she went on, returning to her high-winged armchair by the fire, 'as a matter of fact there was one period in my life when I became thoroughly satiated with gardenias. Now if I were a tactful woman perhaps I should not say that, with my only great-nephew scarcely settled in his chair after giving me a basket of gardenias that probably cost him a week's income—but I think you and I understand each other well enough for that, and anyhow I no longer feel as I did then about gardenias. It was just that I became so *weary* of them . . . It's quite an amusing little story, in its way. Shall I tell you about it? I think I will, if only because I think it shows me up in a particularly good light as a really tactful woman . . .

'Years ago, when I was in the thirties, the grand old days when I was the toast of the town (yes, would you believe it, the toast of the town, your poor old Aunt Rosie!), I went to a dance at a house in what would now be the W.1 district of London. I had been singing earlier in the evening and arrived at the house at about midnight. There were several people in a group round my hostess—I forget now who she was—when I went up to be received by her, and it happened that one of these people, a moony-looking boy of about your age, was introduced to me and asked me for a dance. I didn't catch his name, he was just another goggling young man to me. We danced a waltz together, and he never said a word. Not a word. He just goggled, as if he wanted to say something and couldn't manage to get it out. I felt rather sorry for him, he looked so awkward and embarrassed. I wondered what I could say to break the ice. He was wearing a gardenia in his buttonhole. The perfume of it was almost overpowering, I felt I should

be glad when the dance ended and I could get away from this calf-eyed young man and his obtrusive gardenia. Meanwhile, however, it was something to talk about.

“How very sweet your gardenia smells,” I said encouragingly, hoping to draw him out. Stuttering with embarrassment and blushing all over his face, he asked me if I liked gardenias. I didn’t, not much, but it would have been rather nipping to the conversation to have said so. Anyhow, the dance was just ending and it didn’t really matter what I said. “Why, yes,” I said casually, “I think they’re almost my favourite flower.” The music stopped then, and would you believe it, he whipped the gardenia out of his buttonhole and presented it to me with a bow, as if I had been Queen Elizabeth and he Sir Walter. I didn’t want it, I hated the smell of it, so I made some excuse about never wearing flowers because they died on me, and slipped it back in his buttonhole. That’s all I remember about the boy, I should never have given him another thought if it had not been that the next day, and every day thereafter while I remained in London, a posy of gardenias, sent anonymously, arrived at my home for me. It was not till after about a week of vaguely wondering who the diffident cavalier might be that I connected the gardenias with this moon-faced youth at the dance. . . . I thought it was rather sweet and romantic of him, though silly, but the gardenias themselves I always gave to my housekeeper, the scent of them sickened me. Every morning regularly the box would arrive from the florist’s, after a time I used not to trouble to open it myself. . . . This went on for eight or ten weeks, until I went abroad for my American tour.

‘There’s a sequel to this story. Now listen carefully, Peter, this is where the beautiful side of my nature comes out. It was about fifteen years ago, when I was staying by

myself in Cannes. You know how when you are by yourself in an hotel you always look around at the other guests and speculate about them. Well, there was a man in the hotel whose face seemed familiar to me, but I couldn't place him. By and by, as we were both alone and far too old and withered to bother about introductions, we got on speaking terms, and it was then, when he spoke, that I remembered my moony young romantic of thirty years before. There was no mistaking him. It was not so much that this elderly man—he wore a pointed beard that made him look older than he was—it wasn't so much that he resembled the young man physically, it was more that he had the same stamp upon him, the same attitude, the same fundamental diffidence. It's difficult to convey—it was a kind of essential immaturity, though he was what the world would call a sophisticated man ; a deep-down squeamishness, an ostrich-like denial of actuality. The youthful mooniness had ripened to a middle-aged cynicism that was obviously sentimentality gone sour. In other words, he was still a romantic, and somehow I felt a certain responsibility towards him, an anxiety lest the lovely bloom of unreality might be brushed from him. There was no doubt that he knew who I was, and, he being the kind of man he was, there was no doubt either that he remembered perfectly his youthful gesture of the anonymous gardenias. That he did not so much as mention having met me years before was sufficient proof that the trivial incident of the gardenias was still important to him, as of course it would be to a romantic.

' Well, I felt gentle towards him. And one night, the night before I was leaving, when we were sitting on the terrace, I manœuvred the conversation round to memory, the kind of thing that sticks in your memory when you are

old, the little things you remember when the big ones are forgotten—four ducks on a pond, in fact. There was one little thing, I said, that I had remembered for thirty years—and I told him how, when I was a young woman, I had met a young man at a dance who had found out that I loved gardenias, and how every day afterwards until I left London there had been delivered at my house three lovely white gardenias, with never a word or a sign of who had sent them. It was so very sweet and gracious of that unknown young man, I said, that all my life since I had remembered those gardenias. . . . I put it very nicely, I remember, yet perfectly impersonally. It really was a miracle of tact.'

'Didn't he say anything, Aunt Rosie?'

She laughed—a very rich, gay laugh for an old woman.

'Of course not—didn't I tell you he was a romantic?'

We were silent for a moment. The air was saturated with the voluptuous perfume of the gardenias. It was almost too much, that exceeding sweetness.

'Don't you think that *gestures* are enormously important, Aunt Rosie?' I asked suddenly. She chuckled.

'Only other people's,' she said. 'What is important is to allow other people to make theirs. You see, it keeps them happy,' said my Great-aunt Rosalba.

## *FIRE AND SWORD.*

BY ETHEL IRVING.

### FIRE.

LAHAD DATO, which in the Malay language means the burial-place of chiefs, was one of those isolated, gloomy little townships built over mud-flats edging a mangrove swamp on the east coast of Borneo.

For many weeks of the rainy season our only means of exercise was to walk up and down the timber wharf which ran out for a quarter of a mile to deep water. The rest of the town, that wasn't built on stilts, lay ankle-deep in greasy mud or several feet under water. So we took our evening constitutional on this shaky old pier where one of those enormous batrachians, nicknamed by us Lizzie the Lizard, lurking somewhere in the vast tobacco sheds, encouraged us with unearthly croaks and gurgles, but always remained invisible.

How often did we gaze across the wide expanse of Darvel Bay hoping that something, some day, might break the monotony of out-station life ! Sometimes a little fleet of fishing boats belonging to a race of sea gypsies swept across the bay ; their billowing sails, striped black and white, always reminded me of peppermint bulls'-eyes of childhood which also had a way of dissolving into thin air.

The arrival of the fortnightly mail steamer was a great event for our very small British community, cut off as we were from any amusements and rarely seeing a new face. On one of these eagerly-awaited mail days, I was expecting my husband at any moment to bring up the ship's captain

for tea, who would give us news of the outer world, when suddenly a tremendous clamour broke out from the town below. The Residency was perched for coolness on a hill overlooking Darvel Bay, so, rushing to the balcony, I was alarmed to see columns of smoke and flames bursting out of the rows of little palm-thatched houses sprawling on their rickety stilts over the mud-flats. A strong wind swept the fire along with it and, helped by the draught rushing under the houses, in two hours almost the whole of Lahad Dato town had gone up in flames, leaving two thousand Chinese, Malays and Indians homeless.

Very little property could be rescued, but fortunately only one life was lost, that of the old opium smoker whose overturned oil lamp had started the fire while he lay in his drugged sleep, never to wake again.

The Residency seemed at first in no immediate danger, but I had seen too many jungle fires furiously raging to feel secure, so the servants were told to pack up our valuables and take the furniture on to the lawns behind, for the fate of the house depended entirely on the wind. A hasty scrawl soon arrived from my husband who, with all the police, prisoners and volunteers, including the captain of the mail-boat with his crew, were busy fighting the flames. As the fire increased, columns of choking, grimy smoke surrounded our house. Coolies had to be posted on the palm-thatch roof to drench it and pick off red-hot cinders, blown on to it by the wind. In all this excitement and bustle my little five-year-old boy seemed strangely apathetic, explained by his sickening for an attack of measles which developed next day. I have always felt grateful to him for postponing it till, at any rate, we had the beds back once more inside the drenched but badly scorched house.

At six o'clock that evening my husband, grimed and



almost unrecognisable, his white linen suit torn and singed, arrived to say that the fire was now checked and we might safely get the furniture back again and out of the rain which was just beginning. It seemed equally damp indoors, however, with walls and ceilings dripping from our efforts to keep sparks from the thatch and wooden walls !

Food and shelter had to be found for the poor supperless and homeless crowd who began to stream up the Residency hill with their babies, cocks and hens and other possessions tied up in bundles, all that they had been able to save. To house them was comparatively simple as the manager of the tobacco estate handed over his vast sheds, luckily empty of tobacco, to be used as a temporary shelter.

For many a night following the fire we looked down from our hill on to the charred wooden posts of burnt-out buildings glowing crimson in serried rows ; these incandescent torches were all that remained to show where the old town had stood. At low tide pathetic figures stirred and poked up the slimy mud, hoping to discover in the ruin and tangle of twisted iron some household treasure, but it was all in vain. Lahad Dato was to prove not only the burial-place of Dato's, but also of many a cherished possession.

#### SWORD.

When anything did occur to ruffle Lahad Dato's stagnation, it was always meteor-like in its suddenness. Our next thrill was an 'amok,' one of the worst in the country's annals and the usual story of crossed love. Ahmat, a young Malay, jilted and burning with revenge, planned to run 'amok,' intending to murder, in the first place, the girl who had thrown him over. He performed the proscribed prayers and ablutions and, inflamed with his woes, rushed

from the mosque brandishing his newly-sharpened 'parang' (native sword).

His lost love caught a distant glimpse of this terrifying sight and fled for her life into the mangrove swamp. There she cowered till the hue and cry was over, saving her life at the expense of eleven innocent victims. The first obstacle in Ahmat's headlong rush was an old water-carrier loaded with two heavy cans dangling from his shoulder. Defenceless as he was, one blow of the 'parang' left him headless. A Chinese shopkeeper just managed to save his own life by snatching up a trident used in theatrical performances. This he flourished so fiercely that he headed off the murderer, who then plunged into the main street, slashing as he went at a little Chinese and laying open her skull. A jaunty young Bajau, who had come over that day from a distant island, was his next victim, felled at one stroke. A barber, busy shaving a man outside his shop, fled for his life, leaving his customer, seated and defenceless, to receive a blow which just failed to decapitate him as the 'parang' was by now rather blunted.

The town was by this time in a wild uproar. Among a chorus of shrill police whistles, screams of terror, frenzied slamming and barricading of shop doors, the native police rushed out firing wildly. My husband was away on a tour of inspection, so the District Officer, left alone in charge, pluckily rushed out of his office to discover the cause of this commotion and met the amoker face to face, waving his now-dripping 'parang.' But some gleam of reason checked Ahmat from killing a European; he suddenly swerved and the District Officer was actually in greater danger from the rifles of the police as they blazed away in their excitement. Sultan Gani, a wealthy old Indian merchant, crouching inside his shuttered shop, was mortally

wounded by a bullet that, ricocheting through the wooden wall, also struck and killed a Chinese who was sitting in the shop.

And so the tale of death went on, till the madman was finally put out of action by a bullet. With the exception of my faithful 'ayah,' all my servants had fled at the first shrieks of 'amok,' 'amok,' and I wondered where I could hide my two small children if the murderer suddenly swerved up a short cut by the garden path to the Residency, all open in that tropical midday heat. It was with vast relief that I heard the clamour and shouts gradually die down and saw in the distance a procession of Chinese and Malays winding its way up the hill to the hospital. The infuriated crowd was dragging the wounded amoker over the stony road to join the rows of his bleeding victims. He himself recovered from his bullet wound to meet a well-deserved fate on the gallows, for he had caused the death of eleven people in about the same number of minutes.

Such were the incidents of fire and sword which occasionally galvanised the monotony of our daily life behind the mangrove swamps of Lahad Dato, the burial-place of chiefs.

## THE BOUL' MICH' TO-DAY.

BY HERBERT A. WALTON.

### I.

To what extent does the student who parades the Boulevard Saint-Michel to-day resemble his predecessor immortalised in the pages of Henri Murger? The observer in search of an answer to this question has an abundance of data so far as the moderns are concerned, for the young men and women attending the courses of the University of Paris now form an army of 32,000.

This is a fact strikingly illustrative of the value attached to a liberal education by our friends the French. Throughout many generations tens of thousands of comparatively poor people in the provinces—the small landed peasantry which forms the backbone of the country—have deprived themselves of luxuries, even of comforts, to save sufficient to send their sons to the Sorbonne, and the tradition is maintained despite the peace-time economic crisis that has succeeded the blackness of the War. And this in spite of the fact that a big proportion of those who succeed in their examinations often earn in the liberal professions or as *fonctionnaires* a living much inferior to that of a labourer. Still, the ambition of the majority of French youths is to enter Government employment, and higher education is the key by which entrance into an *administration* is to be secured.

But, though the predictions of recent years that the economic situation would empty the amphitheatres, the studios, and the laboratories of the Latin Quarter have been

falsified, the students of to-day are undoubtedly different beings, in certain fundamental respects, from the care-free youths of pre-War days whose laughter echoed on the Montagne Sainte-Geneviève, and who, in their more boisterous manifestations, were the terror of the bourgeois. The students still amuse the citizens, as well as their complaisant friends the police, by parading the streets in long Indian file—the game of the *monôme*—and still, on the occasion of the Quat'z-Arts ball, astonish the stranger by displaying themselves on the boulevards with painted bodies partially covered by leopard skins or Roman togas. On the whole, however, life is a very serious business for the successors of the Eugène and the Marcel with whose studies and amours we are familiar through the pages of Alfred de Musset.

## II.

Amid all the changes of time, the Latin Quarter remains a self-centred town entirely dissimilar from the Paris of the *Grands Boulevards*. Its atmosphere is still warm and friendly ; within the area of the Sorbonne one is at home. I have lived for periods in other parts of the city, but have always gravitated inevitably back to this district where the residents, whether they actually know one another or not, all feel that they form part of an intimate and sympathetic confraternity. And, though the *Boul' Mich'* is much less lively than it was a generation ago, it is still one of the most consistently animated thoroughfares of Paris.

Take a seat on the terrace of one of its cafés, and you will be able to witness the passing of streams of vivacious young people of both sexes. Allowing one's imagination to run (and is not the café terrace an ideal spot for this pleasurable diversion ?) one wonders if this young man of the *Faculté de Médecine* is destined to bud into an eminent doctor, if that

young woman of the *Faculté de Droit* will some day be a Portia in the Palais de Justice. In some cases there comes a sorrowful train of conjecture. Is this youth or that girl fated to bring bitter disappointment to parents in the provinces who have deprived themselves of so much in order to furnish him or her with the equipment for the making of an honourable career?

It is a cosmopolitan crowd that parades between the Boulevard Saint-Germain and the Luxembourg Gardens, that delectable terrain on which the young people acquire the gentle art of Parisian *flânerie*. Representatives of all the nations of Europe, as well as citizens of the United States, are among the 5,300 foreigners on the roll of the University. The large number of coloured students is indicative of the extent to which the famous seat of learning brings together East and West. France's North African colonies send large contingents of youths who, it is to be borne in mind, are citizens of the Republic just as much as is the Parisian born. For there is practically no colour bar in France—the fact was brought home very sharply to some American tourists a few years ago by M. Poincaré, following an incident in a Montmartre cabaret.

A significant fact about the modern university of Paris is the great number of girl students. There are not far from 10,000 of them—that is, close on a third of the students on the register. The typical *étudiante*, with her *serviette* bulging with books tucked under her arm, is nowadays so familiar a feature as to occasion no comment. She is a most studious person, and the success with which she holds her own in the examinations is attested by the great number of women who enter the law, medicine and other professions.

Literature, languages, philosophy, and psychology are the subjects to which the biggest proportion of young women

are attached, their roll in the *Faculté des Lettres* totalling 4,200. The *Faculté de Droit* comes second, with 1,600 ; the assiduity with which law is now studied by the fair sex in France is patent to anyone frequenting the Palais de Justice, the corridors and courts of which have been so appreciably brightened by the persistent attendance of many *avocates*. The barrister's robes by no means depreciate a woman's attractiveness—as the young ladies of the *Faculté de Droit* are well aware. Third on the list of studies to which the *étudiante* is devoting herself is medicine, the faculty of which includes 1,450 women. The allied *Faculté de Pharmacie* claims 900 ; and the *Faculté des Sciences* 1,120.

A very fine camaraderie exists between *étudiant* and *étudiante*. They fraternise in the cafés of the *Boul' Mich'*. Rarely are they more than fellow-students, and it would be a mistake to imagine that the girl student—taking the average—has replaced Mimi Pinson in the sentimental domain. Naturally there are cases in which the common interests of University lectures are supplanted by a more tender sentiment. A pretty sight is that of Paul and Virginia of the Sorbonne seated in the Luxembourg Gardens, incomparable pleasure of the Paris student. Virginia's head is reposing on Paul's shoulder. Their text-books are lying neglected on the bench ; they are immersed in that venerable tome whose pages have been turned over and over since the human race began.

### III.

But hard facts compel one, however reluctantly, to put aside the romance of the delightful Luxembourg Gardens and revert to the dominating prosaic aspects of the student's life. For the investigating stranger a talk, over a *demi*, with some youth whose confidence is gained may throw a flood

of illumination on the difficulties of the existence of many a student. There is no mere supposition, nor is there any exaggeration, in the facts presented here, for prolonged spells of residence within the shadow of the Pantheon's dome have given me an intimate understanding of the extent to which the traditional romance of Bohemia is nowadays overwhelmed by drab economic circumstances.

'*Vraiment, la vie est dure,*' remarked to me recently a youth from the Auvergne who is studying medicine. He revealed the details of his budget. 'Though they can ill afford it,' he said, 'my parents allow me eight hundred francs per month. I pay three hundred francs for a little sixth-floor room. After my early morning roll and coffee I have the same for lunch, and have to content myself with one real meal a day—dinner, put off till as late in the evening as possible so that I can do without anything before retiring.

'A *prix fixe* meal at the cheap *chope* I frequent costs eight francs. Books have to be bought; and one is forced to change them often—especially in the *Faculté de Médecine*—and there are other directly educational expenses in connection with the University. I leave you to work out how much of my allowance is left to pay the *blanchisseuse* and other bills. There is certainly no margin for amusement.'

He has, indeed, no leisure time, even if he had the means for amusement. In order to make ends meet he gives French lessons to a few foreigners. He has his lectures to attend, and his studies are often pursued far into the early morning in his little room.

This life of double labour is common. Apart from the giving of language lessons, or doing translations for publishers, students undertake every type of work to enable them to continue their studies and to try to realise the hopes reposed in them by anxious parents in distant departments.



Some do tradesmen's book-keeping ; others take part-time jobs as waiters in cafés or restaurants, as *chasseurs* or door-keepers in cinemas. A medical student who eventually passed his examinations with honours acted for a while as assistant to a bill-poster, and later engaged in the depressing experience of selling—or trying to sell—goods from door to door on commission. A brilliant scientific student was recently washing cars in a garage ; another, preparing for the Doctorat of Philosophy, was employed as a road repairer from nine o'clock at night till five in the morning.

An identical heroism—the word is, surely, justifiable—is displayed by needy girl students, many of them of substantial scholastic attainments. Some *étudiantes* from Central Europe, accomplished linguists, give lessons in several languages ; *étudiantes en Droit* act as secretaries to lawyers ; others who are studying medicine or chemistry work some hours per day in surgeries or pharmacies, or do night nursing in hospitals. Others still are not above acting as nursemaids or domestic servants during the time they are not studying. In some instances, alas, the struggle cannot be maintained, and there have been tragic premature endings to promising careers.

Happily, there are many channels through which the most unfortunately placed students are helped. There is, for instance, the system of the *prêt d'honneur*, or the *prêt d'obligeance*, by which loans are advanced for the purchase of books and other direct university expenses. Then, substantial help is afforded by organisations which if mentioned individually would be seen to make an impressive list. Notable among them are the *Société des Amis de l'Université*, and—for the benefit of young women—the *Association Générale*. Through the efforts of various institutions clubs

have been established, and cheap restaurants opened. *Le Foyer des Etudiants*, in the Rue des Fossés-Saint-Jacques, provides an excellent luncheon for 7 fr. 25, or even 6 fr. And much has been achieved in the betterment of university conditions by the *Union Nationale*.

#### IV.

But with all these agencies at work, the average student has to count his sous anxiously. No wonder that he does not figure in the public eye to anything like the extent that his predecessors did. In bygone days he played a conspicuous rôle in the Mi-Carême procession, a joyous festival that is now only a memory and to which its modern manifestations bear little essential resemblance. He used, too, to play so vigorous a part in the Sainte-Catherine celebration as to call for the intervention of the police. On some special occasion in his scholastic career he celebrates in groups at Montparnasse, or perhaps Montmartre ; but, generally speaking, he is unable to indulge in any riotous relaxation. When he does force himself on public attention it is, as a rule, in connection with some serious political movement. Léon Daudet's *Camelots du Roi* are mostly students who, in addition to their selling of the *Action Française*, may be depended upon to be well to the fore in any conflict with the Communists. But it is only a small section that meddles in political or social affairs ; to the typical student, life in Paris means little outside lectures in the Rue de la Boucherie or research in the library of the Sorbonne.

The normal recreation of the average student is centred in the cafés of his beloved *Boul' Mich'*. There he talks with congenial confrères over a modest *bock* or a *café-crème*. Games of dominoes, jacquet or picquet are played. It is

the café that supplies the newspapers of the day—not merely those of the capital but a selection of provincial organs, the perusal of which carries many a lad in imagination and memory to his home region. And in the more important establishments young foreign clients can see the papers of their countries.

Some of the cafés dear in memory to a former generation have disappeared, and 'old boys' on a visit to the scene of their student days indulge in the dirge, '*Où sont les cafés d'autan ?*' Some old cafés that have survived have been 'modernised'—one or two to a flamboyant degree. And most of the restaurants, too, have undergone transformations ; with their quick-lunches at the counter—so out of tune with that traditional French eating which was almost a rite—they bear no resemblance whatever to those old cheap little cook shops which abounded in the Rue Mouffetard and in other streets round about the Pantheon.

## V.

A factor that has created a revolution in the life of the Paris student is the establishment of the *Cité Universitaire*, situated in the neighbourhood of the Parc de Monsouris. The *Cité*, which owes its genesis to M. Emile Deutsch de la Meurthe, has up to the present nineteen foundations, French and foreign, providing 2,400 rooms for students. Canada, the United States, Argentina, Armenia, Belgium, Cuba, Denmark, Greece, Holland, Indo-China, Japan, Monaco, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland have their separate foundations, colleges, or *maisons*. Great Britain, instead of having an exclusively national hostel, is represented in the Collège Franco-Britannique which was opened at the beginning of 1937. It possesses 225 rooms, of which 140 are reserved for girls. This institution, which has taken the place of the

original scheme of a British hostel, furnishes an ideal opportunity for conversation and an interchange of ideas between the youth of France and Great Britain.

The heart of the *Cité* is the *Maison Internationale*, a memorial of the munificence of Mr. John D. Rockefeller ; this, with its lecture halls, theatres, cinema, gymnasium, café and restaurant, as well as the tennis courts, etc., in its grounds, is a most comprehensive club where young people of all nationalities are brought together.

The life of the student in the *Cité* is very different from that of the overwhelming majority of his colleagues lodged in the little hotels, or *pensions*, that cater specially for him. Naturally these places are of great variety, and, according to the luck or ill-luck of his choice, the young man may be comfortably or uncomfortably accommodated. With comparatively few exceptions, the rooms, though small, are clean, and central heating, as well as running hot and cold water—about which even good-class hotels in Great Britain make so much ado in their advertisements—are there as a matter of course in a considerable percentage of cases. Some of the students' hotels, filled with congenial companions, are jolly places, but the typical *hôtel garni* is a dingy establishment which its occupants are glad to desert for the more homely atmosphere of the cafés where, over a *café-crème* and a *croissant*, much serious study is done. To the average student, therefore, the modern comforts—the comparative luxuries—of the *Cité Universitaire* are alluring, and it is not surprising that there is a long waiting list of applicants for rooms there.

The students now in the *Cité* do not form a big proportion of the University's total of 32,000, but the development of the foundation, even though it is only residential, on the grandiose scale intended must mean eventually a

substantial subtraction from the life and the liveliness of the Latin Quarter. From the romantic point of view such a transformation of a vital part of the real Paris would no doubt furnish more material for the conventional regret for the passing of the 'good old days.' But, as has been shown, the conditions of to-day, both educational and economic, have consigned the old 'Vie de Bohème' to the realm of misty reminiscence. Its shadows, if they still haunt the *Boul' Mich'*, must realise that their beloved quarter, yielding to the inexorable march of modernity, has become metamorphosed into a prosaic Student Town in which they would be strangers.

That the students themselves are keenly conscious of the gulf dividing them from the old Bohemianism is proved by their periodic attempts to revivify the past. The most ambitious and most recent effort of the kind has been the series of celebrations during the first week of April this year. The outward symbol of this resuscitation was the wearing of the old velvet *béret* nowadays affected by only a few students; hence the happy description, *La Semaine de la Faluche*, given to the jollifications. The spirits of Verlaine and Baudelaire may have looked with sympathy—though a sympathy mixed, no doubt, with benevolent criticism—on the processions, the dances and the sporting competitions with which their successors of these difficult days have sought to recapture the joyous atmosphere with which the *Boul' Mich'* was invested in bygone centuries.

## SIC VENIT GLORIA.

*Better bestow your all and penniless die  
 Than hoard a pitiful heap of futile pelf :  
 Into the vastness of Eternity  
 One only priceless thing you take—yourself !*

*Better have faith in falsehood to the last,  
 Bearing Illusion into age from youth,  
 Than over Beauty doubt's dim mantle cast,  
 Or hold to scorn the radiant light of Truth !*

*Better be called a fool, an 'innocent,'  
 Trusting that by your grave sad hearts will weep,  
 Than boast the mockery of a monument  
 Beneath whose marbled weight you cannot sleep !*

*Write not : Both Fame and Fortune he achieved  
 And to his spirit Sorrow was denied ;  
 Write : Life was sweeter just because he lived,  
 And Death less dreadful just because he died !*

*O ye, who study Christ's supremest story,  
 Following the path all valiant souls have trod,  
 Learn yet one truth—Life only lifts to glory  
 When Man for ever seeks a nobler God !*

J. M. STUART-YOUNG.

*CHILDREN OF THE DEEP.*

BY BEATRICE WASHBURN.

MISS MERRICK was pleased with her position of school teacher in Vermilion parish.

‘It is probably the only place in America where the children come to school in boats,’ she wrote happily to her family in Chicago. ‘Even the smallest ones can swim, and it is like being in a foreign country because they all speak French.’

Miss Merrick wrote a good many letters because she was an intelligent girl and liked to describe her surroundings. She would have no dearth of literary material here, she thought, as she looked up from her writing-table out towards the Gulf of Mexico. There was nothing to be seen from the schoolhouse but sea and sky. It was almost like being on a boat, especially as the schoolhouse was built on stilts and trembled when the wind blew hard or when the great rollers thundered in from the Caribbean.

‘La mer she is full of wind to-day,’ the children would say as they gathered in the morning for their A B C’s; ‘it must be that you close the windows.’

They were the sons and daughters of fisher people and trappers and they knew the Gulf as city children know the traffic of the streets. There was only one school in this corner of the parish, far down the forgotten end of the continent, so that Miss Merrick taught all ages, from five-year-old Maurice to sixteen-year-old Manette. They were curiously secretive children, inarticulate as people always are who live beside great bodies of water, and sometimes Miss

Merrick thought she would have to unlearn all the new psychology methods she had been taught in the training school at Chicago.

'They have a different racial heritage,' she put in her letters. 'They are the descendants of the Acadians who came to Louisiana from Nova Scotia, so they are not like Americans at all.'

They were more resourceful for one thing, she decided. Even the smallest could handle his own pirogue as easily as the children of New Orleans manage roller-skates, and many of them paddled to school for miles along the open Gulf. Their parents did not worry about them, just as city parents do not worry about motor-cars. They merely hung a tiny cross around their necks and gave a look at the sky to see if there would be a hurricane. They did not mind an ordinary blow, for all the children could swim, and it was nothing uncommon to have them appear at nine o'clock in tights that their mothers had knitted for them. They did not go home to lunch because home was sometimes 20 miles away and they could not have come back again the same day. A motor-launch was furnished by the school board to pick up the more distant ones, but most of them came in pirogues, that curious Indian canoe that has been adapted by the coast people for their main transportation system.

Sometimes when she looked over her classroom where these small students sat and regarded her politely like grown-up people, Miss Merrick would have a momentary longing for a yellow-haired pupil. These great dark eyes and mops of soft brown hair made her feel almost like a foreigner in her own land. And the difference in language heightened that impression. They spoke the French of the swamps and bayous, a bastard tongue that had but little



resemblance to the language of diplomacy. The American Government decreed that these strange citizens should be taught in English, but sometimes it was difficult to interpret ideas to people who spoke another tongue. She had to begin at the beginning.

Inevitably, as teachers will, she formed an involuntary fondness for her youngest pupil, Maurice, who had roguish eyes and a mischievous disposition. She found him very lovable.

‘Do you think he should come alone this long way?’ she asked one of the older pupils one windy morning when the little boy came into the schoolroom dripping wet, a rainbow-coloured jelly-fish in his chubby hand.

Miss Merrick had to pass a rule against bringing jelly-fish to school, thinking, as she did so, how strange that would sound to city teachers. But she could not keep out the bright-coloured shells that they gathered on the beach, or the skeletons of flying fish, or the bits of carved driftwood with which they amused themselves.

‘Maurice, he carries himself well,’ said the older student consolingly. ‘True, he lives at a distance. But he is not always alone. He has an escort.’

Miss Merrick could not imagine what he meant. Maurice was an only child and she had seen him herself paddle his own pirogue in from the back marshes where he lived. But there was no understanding these children. Sometimes she did not even try. And evidently the boy was right, for that afternoon she looked out of the window and saw Maurice playing with a strange little girl on the beach. The tide was low, so they had a natural playground. The curious thing about it was that the little girl was blond so she knew it could not be one of her own pupils. She had never seen a blond child in this district.

When she rang the bell for afternoon class she asked

Maurice about it. 'Where is the little yellow-haired girl? Why do you not bring her in with you?'

Maurice looked at the floor from under his lovely fringed eyelashes and a shadow of a smile touched his infant face. 'C'est une de mes amies,' he answered quietly. 'She does not care for school.'

Miss Merrick felt a little troubled about it, for hers was the only school in nearly 100 miles and obviously this child should be under her protection. There must be more than one of them, for the next day she noticed a bigger girl, with hair the colour of the sand at sunset, playing with Manette, her oldest and most intelligent pupil. When she called them to come in Manette ran to her obediently, but the other girl merely stood at a distance and stared at her. When she looked again she was gone.

'Who are those blond children?' she asked Manette. 'Why do they not come to school?'

'They are the children of the Gulf,' answered Manette as Maurice had done. 'They do not occupy themselves with school.'

'Where do they live?' asked Miss Merrick, thinking she would report them to the Board of Education.

'Oh,' said Manette vaguely, 'out there.' The sweep of her arm indicated the wide ocean where there was only the dazzling glitter of water against sky.

'Mademoiselle should hear them sing,' continued Manette politely. 'They sing beautiful songs. Especially on stormy nights. We can hear them from our beds.'

Miss Merrick felt disturbed. These children were musical and were getting no advantages! They should at least be studying piano or harmony.

'I shall visit their parents and see that they come to school,' she declared firmly.

But Manette was equally firm. 'They have no parents. They are not like the rest of us,' she struggled with the unfamiliar tongue, and then fell back into her own. 'They have no families. They are children of the Deep. Des enfants de la mer.'

That afternoon after school Miss Merrick arranged for Gaston the shrimp fisher to take her to the shore in his launch. If she had been in a city she would have ordered a taxi-cab. But Gaston and his launch were the taxi for the Vermilion coast.

'I desire to visit a family,' she directed him as she stepped into the prow; 'but I do not know where they live. They are all blonds. They have yellow hair.'

Gaston gave her no encouragement. 'There are no blond-haired children on this coast,' he declared positively. 'I know all the families from here over to Terrebonne and they are all dark-haired. If Mademoiselle saw any yellow-haired children, they must be visitors.'

In one afternoon Miss Merrick visited twenty families, parents of her pupils. Some of them lived in high shacks along the water's edge, protected from the tides by stilts. Some of them in fishing-camps at the end of a long runway. These, too, were over the water, so you could lean out of the window and catch fish. Some were in tiny huts back in the marshes, at the end of winding bayous, where Gaston could hardly push his prow on account of the water hyacinths. Some lived in houseboats, and she even visited the shrimping fleet out in the Gulf. Everywhere they treated her with utmost politeness and offered her dripped coffee and fried shrimp and crab gumbo. They were easygoing, amiable people and they loved their children, so they exerted themselves to be kind to the teacher. But they spoke in one language and Miss Merrick in another, so conversation was

difficult and she was never able to make herself quite clear about the yellow-haired children. Most of the Cajin mothers just shook their heads, but one or two said, just as Manette had done, 'Those are not ordinary children. They will not attend school. They are *enfants de la mer*.'

'Children of the Sea,' repeated Miss Merrick aloud on her way home to the faithful Gaston. 'What do they mean?'

Gaston looked at her thoughtfully from beneath his deep brows, cut like those of a Basque fisherman. And he asked another question in return.

'Mademoiselle has not lived along this coast? She is not familiar with the Gulf?'

'No,' said Miss Merrick proudly. 'I come from Chicago.' And she saw Gaston nod his head as though that explained everything.

The next morning the blond children were there again. She saw them climb out of the boat with Maurice and then they turned and plunged back into the water. Many of the children did this when they were playing. Water was their natural element, so Miss Merrick thought nothing about it, except to be faintly irritated that they defied her overtures to come to school. After that it seemed to her that she saw them a hundred times. At recess they mingled with her own children, at lunch-time they would sometimes come as far as the wooden dock that stretched from the school-house to the beach. At four o'clock they would be waiting the dismissal bell, so they could join their comrades when they came out of their classes. They never came near enough for Miss Merrick to see them plainly, but she noticed that there were quite a number of them—sometimes as many as ten. She could hear the happy babble of their voices, though she never could quite make out what language they spoke.

‘There is simply no use making overtures to them,’ she wrote to her family in Chicago. ‘Every time I walk towards them they run away. And Manette is right about their singing. They have lovely voices. I can often hear them in the evening when I am working over the arithmetic papers. They must live near by, for I can see them swimming out beyond the breakers. They are expert swimmers, as all these children are.’

On moonlight nights when she was alone in the empty schoolhouse, for her bedroom was in the back of the same building so that she was surrounded always by the solitude of sea and sky, she could hear those soft, clear voices, singing in a language she could never quite understand.

‘Their parents should not let them stay out so late,’ she thought disapprovingly. But she was secretly glad they did. This vast Gulf country could be heartbreaking in its loneliness. It was not quite so bad when there were children near by.

Then one morning there was a storm. The wind came in great gusts, almost rhythmic in their regularity, and the Gulf, ordinarily so placid and friendly, became a playground for giant foes. The wind sounded like trumpets and the surf like great drums. Many of the children did not come to school at all and those who did were wet to the skin. Miss Merrick made no attempt to keep classes. There were so few pupils that if the wind had not been rising every moment she would have sent them home.

‘We saw Maurice in his pirogue,’ said Manette, the eldest girl. ‘His mamma should not have permitted him to come. The waves are much too high for a little boy. It is said that they have sent the coast-guard out to look for him.’

Miss Merrick knew the coast-guard well. It was the

policeman of all this lonely coast, a slim, business-like boat whose skippers knew the bayous and all the inlets along the Gulf. Calling out the coast-guard was equivalent to calling out the emergency service, the hospitals, the Federal officers, and the relief organisations of a great city. Miss Merrick was troubled. She could not imagine how they would ever find a five-year-old child along these miles and miles of swamp and stormy water. She went to the window and looked out, though there was nothing to see but clouds and blackness. The wind hurled loud snatches of rain at the window and rocked the frail wooden building as though it had been a ship. Outside the roar of the breakers sounded like the thunder of artillery. Darkness had fallen though it was only four o'clock. For the tempest had obscured the sun and angry clouds now governed all the sky.

'I cannot stand it if it keeps up all night,' thought Miss Merrick, striving to maintain her composure before the silent children. They were apparently accustomed to storms like this, for they made no outcry. Only their small, pale faces worried her, for they were the faces of people old before their time. They did not cry or fuss as city children would have done, for they had been born and brought up in the clamour of great winds.

'No one can survive a storm like this,' said Miss Merrick aloud, merely to be saying something. The children did not answer her, they only stared at her from their separate desks where they continued to sit, silently like people who are accustomed to the vagaries of fate and know there is nothing to be gained by protest. She thought of tiny Maurice out alone in all this uproar in a tiny boat. It was a natural instinct that herded people together in cities, she reflected. Men and women who take their families to the lonely places of the earth, the desert or the distant mountains, the far

forests or the solitary coasts, must have something very unusual in their make-up. They must be different from the rest of us.

Through the beating of the waves she could hear the revenue cutter panting out on the Gulf, trying to find Maurice. All the resources of the Government trying to find a little five-year-old boy who had never hurt anyone in his life, who did not yet know his letters, who knew only how to play.

'It sounds like a heart,' she thought, listening to the excited throb-throb of the little boat that pulsed against the mighty clamour of the wind. The other children had not left their desks and were crowded for companionship in a corner of the schoolroom. Miss Merrick, pale now with apprehension, wondered if she would ever leave this frail wood structure or whether she and the children would be added to those martyrs of history, the refugees of Lost Island who perished in the great storm of the 'seventies. The tempest and the wind and waves seemed to resolve themselves into an orchestra of sound. They had a certain rhythm, as though they were under some direction invisible to mortal eyes. She even fancied she could hear high, sweet voices singing above the rolling of the wind. That was what fright did to you, she argued. Stimulated your imagination till you lost all sense of proportion.

The hours went on and the darkness and the uproar grew. It seemed as though it would go on for ever and as though there had never been a quiet world, controlled by man instead of by the storm. Some of the children had fallen asleep at their desks, their heads pillowed on their arms. Miss Merrick had given them some apples she had brought with her for her lunch and had divided her two cheese sandwiches. They had refreshed themselves with drinks of water from the cooler in the corner. And, utterly exhausted,

they had fallen asleep. All but Manette, her eldest pupil, who was awake to keep her company.

They did not try to talk to each other. The roaring of the wind would have made that difficult. Half drowsing, Miss Merrick thought about Chicago, that great city of the plains where she had been born. And she could see again, in her mind's eye, the four long streams of traffic along Michigan Avenue and the profiles of the tall buildings that cut the sky like cliffs.

It was strange, she thought, how people would leave their own families and friends and the backgrounds with which they were familiar, to go adventuring in strange places. What was it that caused them to go? Surely in her case it had been something deeper than an offer from the Board of Education. Perhaps it was destiny, that controls us all and that decides not only how we live but where we die. Her thoughts turned again to Maurice, the baby of her pupils, perhaps now a tossing corpse out there on the stormy Gulf. Destiny . . . destiny . . . Man's life is truly but a spark that flies upward, shaped by consuming fires, blown by the great winds . . .

She felt someone tugging at her elbow and spoke drowsily, for she thought she was back home in Chicago and it was time to get up and go to school.

'I am coming, Mother,' she said aloud. 'Put on the coffee and I will be right there.'

But the voice that answered her was not the placid, comfortable one of her own mother. It was high and excited and it spoke in French.

'Mademoiselle, écoutez. Ecoutez donc. Ce sont des enfants de la mer qui chantent la bas. Mademoiselle, entendez. Entendez.'

She lifted her head and listened as Manette pointed to the door, her small face radiant with excitement.



'It is someone coming through the storm,' said Miss Merrick joyfully. 'Perhaps they have found Maurice. It must be the coast-guard.'

Though surely the coast-guard would not sing like this; high children's voices above the roaring of the wind. She could not hear what they were singing or the words of the language that they spoke, but she ran quickly to the door to let them in.

'Children, come in, mes petits,' she called. Children, outside in such a storm as this!

'Come in, come in, mes enfants,' she called again. 'Come in to shelter.'

Manette had reached the door before her and flung it open. The dark wind rushed in laden with sound and rain. The singing seemed to come from far away as though the children had seen the open door and purposely avoided it. But they had left something on the threshold, a huge bundle strapped with seaweed. The schoolchildren stood around it in a circle and spoke all together, so that their words seemed like a lesson they were learning.

'They have brought him back. We knew that they would bring him back. See, Mademoiselle, they have brought him back.'

The bundle opened its eyes and sat up.

'I am hungry,' said tiny Maurice distinctly. 'I wish coffee and hot soup.'

'You see, Mademoiselle,' said the mother of Maurice two days later when Miss Merrick called to see the patient, 'we have not only enemies in the wind and the Gulf. We have friends as well. Else how could we live and rear our little ones along this cruel coast?'

She was a stout woman and she sat on the front gallery

of her little home placidly knitting a fish-net for her husband. In front of them stretched the shining splendour of sea and sky, a radiant picture stretching as far as the eye could see. At their feet Maurice was playing with some empty shells and he looked up often to smile at his teacher. The wind was gone and the vast Gulf of Mexico was like a mirror. Only a little soft breeze occasionally stirred the surface of the water, laden with the faint scent of spices from some far island in the Caribbean.

‘But the children,’ persisted Miss Merrick, still puzzled. ‘The ones who brought him back. Where do they live? Who are they?’

The mother of Maurice smiled and gave her shoulders that indefinable shrug that is to be found in all people who have a Gallic heritage.

‘Ah, cela, Mademoiselle,’ she said calmly, drawing the thread firmly about her hooked needle, ‘that I do not know. They live in the sea. In Brittany, when I was a little girl, they were grown ladies who sang at sunset to the passing ships. Here in this new world they are younger and more friendly. We who live by the sea, who gain our living from the deep,’—she bent forward suddenly and stroked her little boy’s soft hair—‘we only know that they exist. In all countries. In all times.’

*Louisiana.*

## BY THE WAY.

WHATEVER be the outcome of the Sudeten German dispute—and at the moment of writing no one (except, possibly Herr Hitler) knows whether by the beginning of October millions will be in process of killing and being killed—it is a state of affairs only logically understandable in the kingdoms of the insane that the fate of these millions in many lands should be dependent upon the judgment, ambition, and decision of one man.

★        ★        ★

Summer and cricket, even the Goose Match, is over, so is the 'timeless' Test—a commentary perhaps upon the ephemeral nature of time. It only remains now for timeless football matches—which really would be as sensible and quite as amusing.

★        ★        ★

Now that we have reached the date when all, save the lucky few who are thinking of pheasants, have left sea, moor, and fields and are again amongst the crowds, we may suitably revive our drawing-room pastimes. Foremost amongst these I put two, both of domestic invention. The first came into being many years ago, when we were young and frivolous, at a particularly dull and also very crowded afternoon party : its essence was simplicity, it consisted in starting at one end of the room and getting first to the other and there was but one rule, the players might neither push nor appear to be racing. A sportive girl friend of ours was winning easily when she ran into a *cul-de-sac* formed by a stout lady and a sofa : neither were passable, the player had to retreat and come round and lost the race by a short head.

The second is even simpler : listen for the chance sentence heard in passing, the most choice wins on comparison by popular acclaim. One winner—at a big outdoor reception—was ‘she’s the only Duchess of our kind who’s giving a party’ : another—overheard during a walk—was a servant girl’s, ‘and the more she goes on, the more I enjoy myself!’ The former is slightly reminiscent of the other famous saying (not *the* book-opening, “‘Oh, hell,” said the Duchess’ ; that is too well known) : a young American entering high society in London for the first time sat wrapt to catch something truly aristocratic and what she in fact heard during a lull in the general conversation was, ‘I always undress on a blanket—and then they *can’t* get away!’

★            ★            ★

‘Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest.’ Great words, and never of more value to the world than to-day when to our mass-production of machines we are adding that same output of reading matter. If anyone will stand for a moment or two by any small book-stall—the phenomenon is best studied at a wayside station—he will find spread out in front of him at least five or six examples of our latest product. In the more spacious days of W. T. Stead it was called, it will be remembered, ‘Review of Reviews,’ and was an attempt at a symposium of current thought : to-day it is called what it would appear it is not, a digest, that is to say, an undigested collection of snippets and extracts designed to save strap-hangers and other hurriers the trouble of busy-ing their minds with the original. The number of these new little periodicals is a testimony to their popularity : so few to-day read, mark and learn ; still fewer, inwardly digest.

★            ★            ★

A competition seems to be on : my youngest scored in August, then came that nasty riposte from the grandchild of an old friend in September—grandchildren should be barred—and now my youngest weighs in indomitably again. This is an exact copy of the notice he recently handed me :—  
 ‘ ENI BODY HOO WOOD LIKE TO JOIN THE BEABS [a mere *lapsus calami* for BEARS] CLUB THEY MADE IT UP THEY SELLE ? Now then, grandchild, can you beat it ?

\*       \*       \*

The number of people who go in for Nature study on paper is large, the number who do it really well is small : of this small number Mr. Douglas Gordon is, as readers of CORNHILL have often had occasion to be assured, emphatically one. His new book *The Pageant of Wings* (Murray, 8s. 6d. n.) deals, as its title indicates, with birds, and well and often as these have been written about by the select few, Mr. Gordon's observation, knowledge, and literary excellence enable him to add a most attractive volume to the library of any lover of bird-life, and the text is not a little helped by the many clever little line drawings supplied by his wife. This, as a glance at the index will prove, is full measure, pressed down and running over ; many as are the birds observed and described, others of the wild have their place too, from rabbits to seals.

Another very attractive book on a similar theme, but mainly of one bird rather than many, is the last that, unhappily, will ever come from the pen of Ernest Vesey whose pen-name was Ernest Lewis : readers of his three earlier books will echo the words of Mr. Pellatt, head master of Durnford, that his death was ‘ a real loss to English literature.’ This fourth, and last, prefaced by a simple and revealing little memoir by his father, is correctly entitled *In Search*

of the Gyr-falcon : *An Account of a Trip to North-West Iceland* (Constable 12s. 6d. n.), and it is at once modest, graphic, instructive, and entertaining. The trip was successful in the securing not only of six eyesses, of whom three survived to maturity, 'the absolute queens of the sky,' but also of some notable photographs.

\*       \*       \*

Readers of CORNHILL may remember that Mr. R. L. Mégroz has already given evidence in these pages of close knowledge of the work and fame of Edward Lear, 'the master of nonsense'; now he has edited *The Lear Omnibus* (Nelson, 3s. 6d. n.), with an introduction that he describes as 'skipable' but that is in fact admirable. It is as unquestionable that Lear's influence has been profound as it is that, as Mr. Mégroz remarks, 'many people forget to distinguish between the true nonsense, which is rare, and the pointed wit, which is comparatively common.' Lear is not to be read through, but tasted and enjoyed, and this is just what Mr. Mégroz's volume allows children (of all ages) to do.

It is, however, slight in comparison with the biography, *Edward Lear*, by Angus Davidson (Murray, 15s. n.), and should be read as complementary to that. Mr. Davidson has achieved with remarkable success a very difficult task; he has painted in living colours, most tenderly and understandingly applied, the portrait of the lovable, contrary, whimsical, ugly, bearded man who knew everyone and loved and was loved by many yet was always essentially lonely, who travelled indefatigably and toiled ceaselessly as a landscape painter yet lives immortally not by his landscape pictures but by the nonsense which he wrote and drew for successive generations of children and into which he put so much that was more even than inspired nonsense. This is a beautiful bit of biography

which has contrived to catch both Lear's pathos and his charm and so make him understandable not only as the nonsense king of the world but also as a sentient human soul.



As a contrast, two interesting and totally different books come from the Cambridge University Press, the one *The Colonial Empire and its Civil Service*, by Charles J. Jeffries (10s. 6d. n.), the other *The Faithful Mohawks*, by John Wolfe Lydekker (12s. 6d. n.). The first is sponsored by Lord Harlech, the second by Lord Tweedsmuir : one is inclined to say, 'good enough.' The first tells how the British Colonial Service came into being, and what it is to-day and deserves the words it essays to earn, namely, 'simple and straightforward,' to these could also be added 'practical'—it is, in fact, a most useful account for any who wish to know of the Service as a career to-day : the second, based upon the reports of the first evangelists of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel from 1704 onwards, is of special interest in relation to the early history both of what became the United States and of Canada. Both books may be commended to all those who desire to know more of the story of the British Empire, of which Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson once asked : 'Was there ever a fairy story equal to it?'

From the sister Press of Oxford University comes a volume which it is a pleasure to hold and a delight to read. The lives of those who are not worldly successes frequently are of far greater interest than those of successes : this at any rate is demonstrably true of Hartley Coleridge whose *Letters* (15s. n.) have now been most admirably edited by Grace Evelyn Griggs and Earl Leslie Griggs ; these have not only continual freshness and interest but also reveal Hartley, not

indeed as a man well gratified to battle with fate and circumstance but as a man of unfailingly warm heart and perennial charm : he was lamentably unstable and he loved self-analysis, it is true, but how excellent are his comments both upon himself and upon literature and how entertaining and how free from envy, malice, and all uncharitableness his on the wide circle of his friends. This volume will keep his memory green for many a year yet.

★       ★       ★

Finally, we have Walter Wilkinson. To many—to all the best, in fact—he has now become a habit. Each year he takes his puppets on a journey, and each year (in the chill of the winter evenings presumably) he records their—or rather his—adventures. The only two wishes his books leave is that they were longer and that he told us more about the puppets themselves and the shows given. The 1938 book is *Puppets through America* (Bles, 7s. 6d. n.), and it is quite as good as—perhaps, even, better than—his previous records : it is gaily, audaciously ironic, it shows a great power of observation and also of enjoyment of novelty ; it is at once splendid fun and a very interesting commentary, and it manages to record most vividly several unusual aspects of America, notably experiences and scenes in New Mexico among the Pueblo Indians, and if it is just a little more sophisticated, a little less Puckish and less individual a Mr. Wilkinson than the puppet showman who began as a declared vagabond in English counties, still increasing years and fame have their compensations : I find no difficulty at all in continuing my annual practice of securing Walter Wilkinson, his new volume, and reading it with great enjoyment aloud.

G.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 180.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page iv, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach him by 31st October.

'Friendship's face he loveth well :

'Tis a countenance ——— ———

Sheds a balm o'er every mead and dell.'

1. ' ——— in silks my Julia goes '

2. ' ——— cassia, sandal-buds and stripes  
Of labdanum, and aloe-balls '

3. ' This can unlock the gates of joy ;  
Of horror that, and thrilling fears,  
Or ——— the sacred source of sympathetic tears.'

4. ' Dust to its narrow house beneath !  
——— to its place on high ! '

5. ' She ——— (s) each mortal thing  
Upon this dull earth dwelling ; '

Answer to Acrostic 178, August number : ' Altar, sword, and pen ' (Wordsworth : Sonnet, Milton). 1. AngelS (Blake : ' Night '). 2. LoW (Coleridge : ' The Ancient Mariner '). 3. ToO (Shelley : ' Ode to the West Wind '). 4. AiR (Keats : ' Ode to a Nightingale '). 5. RounD (Fitzgerald : ' Omar Khayyám ').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss E. Dowdeswell, St. Anne's, Verwood, Wimborne, Dorset, and Robert Ramsden, Wigthorpe Hill, Worksop.

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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NOVEMBER 1938.

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## ‘THE TOKEN OF THE COVENANT.’

ON October 1, when the peoples of the world were drawing deep breaths of thankfulness for peace confirmed, a letter was published in *The Times* in which the writer stated that on September 28 as he waited beside a covert an old countryman, pointing to the beauty of the sky, said to him, ‘There’s a God up there,’ and declined to believe that from that sky in the forthcoming days would, through the warfare of Man, rain down destruction, desolation, and death. It may be recorded that clear manifestation of the presence of God was additionally vouchsafed 48 hours later, hours more fateful than any that have been in the history of the world. At 5.30 p.m. on September 30, Neville Chamberlain landed again on English soil from Munich: making his way to the microphone with difficulty through the wildly cheering crowds at Heston, he first thanked the British people for their attitude and then read out the terms of the further agreement as to the desire for friendship between the German and British people signed that morning by Herr Hitler and himself after the settlement of the Sudeten German crisis. A few moments later, having listened in in a tiny cottage on the Sussex downs I started to walk home along the lane. Rain was then falling, but I had not gone more than a couple of hundred paces before there appeared stretched right across the north-eastern sky as brilliant and at the same time as complete a double rainbow as can ever have been seen—its two arcs rose in uninterrupted splendour from earth to heaven, to sink uninterrupted from heaven again to earth.

After dread, thankfulness, and after thankfulness how quickly criticism and doubt and even failure of remembrance ! And yet surely—in spite of later German truculence and the pitiful reliance upon force—the world may believe and must implement the true interpretation thereof :—

*And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations : I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud : And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh ; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud ; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. Genesis ix. 12-16.*

*As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. Ezekiel i. 28.*

*There was a rainbow round about the throne. Revelation iv. 3.*  
G.

LAST OF THE ENGLISH.

BY LORD GORELL.

II. TUDOR TAPESTRY.

MARGARET ROPER, *daughter to Sir Thomas More.*

WILLIAM ROPER, *her husband.*

THOMAS CROMWELL.

KING HENRY VIII.

SIR THOMAS MORE, *Lord Chancellor.*

*Beaufort House, Chelsea : November, 1530.*

(WILLIAM and MARGARET ROPER at the window.)

MARGARET. The leaves are falling swiftly : one by one  
I watch them worried from their hold on high  
And borne away to darkness and to death.  
I wish that Autumn would conceal her pangs,  
Not flaunt them always : beautiful, I know,  
Her robes of colour are, at the height of  
richness,

Yet at their base decay ; one touch of frost,  
One envious gale, and all the glory's rent.

ROPER. Sweet wife, our summer is not at an end,  
Although the year be dying : we are young,  
Our hearts have vigour, and that governs all.  
You have mused within too much upon the  
times ;

Your mind is melancholy without cause :  
Winter is far from us.

MARGARET. Would I were sure!  
A presage broods upon my reluctant heart.

I would be gay, and gayness will not bide ;  
It is as a restless and half-frightened bird.

ROPER. It may be there is wisdom in a mood  
That in these days of turbulence and change,  
The great uncertainties that wall us round,  
Has eyes on darkness rather than on light.  
I had not thought upon it, but it may be  
That, buttressed by foreboding in your love,  
Your life will tread serenely till in age  
You smile upon your fears. All's well enough :  
Your father's feet have scaled the peak of  
greatness,  
Chancellor now, helped by no priestly  
robe,  
And honoured by the friendship of the King—  
To me it is as wonderful as true.

MARGARET. The Cardinal, that great magnificence,  
That pomp and splendour that were all men's  
eyes,  
Soared higher, and is prone.

ROPER. Never was he,  
As your dear father, master of his soul.  
With diligence and energy and power—  
Concede him these—he wrought but for him-  
self :

He gathered round him on his aspiring way  
No friends whose hearts were his ; he needed  
none,

He claimed men's adulation and their envy  
And scorned to build a prop.

MARGARET. Except the King.

ROPER. Aye, and the rearing of a papal power  
Within this realm that should be all himself,

His hand stretched out to grasp the triple  
crown,

The throne of Peter for his eminence.

MARGARET. Poor man, he has lived humiliation's year,  
Each day a vulture tearing at his heart.  
It needs must be that such a mind as his,  
That never has felt the strength of quiet  
things,

Beneath the icy torrent of his fall  
Has lain defenceless and the creeping dread  
Of an unhonoured death has pierced his pride.  
I would not wish him ill.

ROPER. It is too late—  
If wasp-like rumour circling round the Court  
Can point aright—to wish him anything.

MARGARET. Dear husband, has he passed ?

ROPER. He is not dead,  
But on the high road now of such disfavour  
As leads to death. Norfolk is rancorous,  
And though men say the King has still a mind  
To spare his fallen minister, or at least  
Is still disposed to use him, if need be,  
What hopes of further grandeur can be his  
And without grandeur what can Life be worth  
To such as he ? Wish him a peaceful end.

MARGARET. Truly I do, he is brought low indeed.  
Who envies now the Cardinal of York  
Who can her memory cast upon the days  
When as the legate of our Holy Father  
He took all England for his benefice ?  
No : Wolsey will hereafter be a name,  
Not for a life of statecraft and of strength,  
But for the pride that overshoots its mark,

For earth-enthralled ambition—But who is  
coming ?

A cavalcade approaches from the east :  
I see its glinting down beside the river  
With Cromwell in the midst. I fear that  
man,

I know not why. Think you our Lord the  
King

Has further ploys to set my gracious father ?  
The times are hedged with difficulties and  
doubts :

We live to-day—or so my heart proclaims—  
Upon the threshold of a twilight land  
And every little mystery is fear.

ROPER. Be not so timorous, Margaret. Cromwell  
comes,

I doubt it not, but to attend the King :  
And we have watched this passing hour and  
more

The King's slow pacing with his Chancellor,  
His arm about his neck. The royal grace  
Is openly displayed : put off your fears.

MARGARET. I would obey you, husband, if I could  
In this and all things else along my life,  
But can a woman force a jocund note  
Out of the viol of an anxious heart  
For those who are her life ? It well may  
be

That it is foolishness to care so much;  
Prudence rebukes me when the chill winds  
blow,

And yet I would not alter. Love and fear  
Play seesaw in me always for my father :

No children ever were so gently ruled  
As those of his great house.

ROPER. I know it well,  
And rather speak of wishes than of thoughts.  
At least he has the favour of the King :  
Rest upon that.

MARGARET. As Wolsey ?

ROPER. In your voice  
I hear an apprehension that is grievous :  
Dear love, forget.

MARGARET. Is not the word ' forget '   
The very one that Love can never learn ?

(THOMAS CROMWELL *is announced.*)

CROMWELL. Madam, good luck attend you—you, sir, too.

MARGARET. Do you come with labours for the Chancellor ?

ROPER. Or on the service of our Lord the King ?

CROMWELL. Between these lies what difference ? I am come  
In humble duty to our royal master  
To escort him hence when it shall be his will—  
For that alone : what more is it mine to do ?

ROPER. They are beyond, pacing the pleasaunce there,  
And have been close in converse all this noon.

MARGARET. The casement yonder overlooks the garden.

CROMWELL. Looks down upon the King ? An angel's  
glance !

A lowly servant hardly dare approach—  
What ? The King's arm embraces as he  
walks !

The Chancellor is very high in favour.

MARGARET. And no man more deserving.

CROMWELL. All the Court  
Knows the devotion of his daughter, madam ;



And, if it be needful, give me leave to tell—  
But, stay, good fortune lights upon this  
heaven !

The King looks up, he notes my presence  
here :

He knows I serve him to the end of strength.  
A gracious recognition—and his arm  
Is all his own again. I will go forth  
And offer him the duty that I owe.

ROPER. The converse ends : the King is entering now.

MARGARET. He looked upon my father as on one  
Whose voice is always Truth.

CROMWELL. A voice that Kings  
Hear rarely—and more rarely smile upon:

ROPER. Their states would prosper if they heard it  
more.

CROMWELL. Assuredly, good sir : you do me right.  
No meaning else was in my words, or could  
be.

MARGARET. How is it with the Cardinal you serve ?

CROMWELL. Alas, I served him whilst his wisdom shone  
A glorious beacon to our age, and now  
I serve the sun enthroned, I serve the King.

MARGARET. Is it well with your fallen master ?

CROMWELL. He was a man  
Whose deeds were never comrades to his  
words  
But winded vagrants—for the rest, I speak  
To royal ears such tidings as I bring.

(KING HENRY VIII is ushered in, accompanied by the  
Lord Chancellor, SIR THOMAS MORE.)

CROMWELL. May God preserve your gracious Majesty !

KING HENRY. I trust He will. What service brings you here?

CROMWELL. The only service that can lift a man  
To thankfulness and pride, my humble duty  
In all things that affect this happy realm  
Under your crown and favour.

KING HENRY. Words enough :  
Unpack the heavy baggage of your mind.  
The hour grows late ; I would be gone from  
here.

Have you news to tell us of the Cardinal ?

CROMWELL. The Cardinal, my gracious Lord, is sick.

KING HENRY. What bravery is this ?

CROMWELL. No bravery,  
I do beseech your Grace. His face is turned  
Southward as you commanded, but he is  
stayed  
Beyond enforcement by his human frailty.

KING HENRY. Do you say truly ?

CROMWELL. As my spirit lives,  
The shadows lengthen round the Cardinal ;  
Death whispers in his ear, and all his pride  
Is stretched at length a suppliant to his God.

KING HENRY. Is it so indeed ? I would I had not heard it.  
Much treasure rather would I now forgo  
Than lose to the realm his ripe experience—  
But Man is mortal and his labour is done.  
I must away.

CROMWELL. Will it please your Grace to hear  
Further report of labours by your favour  
Vouchsafed to my unworthy diligence ?  
I have a record here of monasteries—

KING HENRY. Anon, anon : must Life be all a labour ?  
I and the Chancellor have worn a path

Down on the sward there talking of the times ;  
We have discussed until my mind is wearied  
How to bring order to the English Church.

MORE. My gracious Lord !—

KING HENRY. No more, I say, no more !  
May not the King have silence when he  
speaks ?

Look to the purpose of our communing :  
I have unfolded it, and it shall be  
According to my will. God's body, sir,  
You have much wisdom and a store of wit  
Such as has pleased me—see you use it well.

MORE. I shall, sir, with all diligence of mind  
According to my loyalty to you  
And to my conscience under God, deserve  
Your gracious confidence.

KING HENRY. And so to horse.  
Commend me to your conscience—and fare-  
well.

(KING HENRY takes his departure, attended out by SIR  
THOMAS MORE and THOMAS CROMWELL.)

ROPER. Thus hastes he to his mistress like a youth  
Hot-foot for glamorous love.

MARGARET. A prince so gifted  
The heart of England throbbed within his  
hand—  
And now dissension, poverty, and dread,  
This long-drawn wrangle with the power of  
Rome,  
These weakened bonds of faith, an opened  
door  
To German heresies. What can abide  
When faith and loyalty to God are loosed ?

ROPER. Even as the servant has the master been,  
A panoply of pride, a will imperious.  
It is no strangeness that the servant fell ;  
The confines of this island had not width  
For two such powers.

MARGARET. Oh, let your speech be low !  
There is danger in it.

ROPER. Nay, but I play no part :  
I make but murmur to your loving ear.

MARGARET. And that, like a shell, is ever resonant,  
As you have noted, with these breaking seas.

(SIR THOMAS MORE *returns alone, slowly.*)

MORE. The King is gone.

MARGARET. My father, you are weary.

MORE. There is a weariness of body, Meg,  
That one night's rest will cure : there is  
besides

A weariness of spirit that endures  
Down to the graveyard's grip—and that is  
mine.

The age is storm-tossed, like a ship at sea  
Swept with stern gales and tortuous, lashing  
waves.

We have not seen their end, but their begin-  
ning.

ROPER. And yet the King has honoured you this day  
With outward show of every favour, sir.  
We noted from this casement how his arm  
Bestowed its proof of confidence and love.

MORE. I give my thanks to God I find his Grace  
My very good lord indeed, and I believe

That he as singularly favours me  
As any subject living in this realm,  
And yet, son Roper, I may tell you this :  
I have no reason to be proud of it,  
For, well I know it, if my head would win him  
A castle in France, it should not fail to go.

ROPER. Hear you that, wife ? No judging word as  
harsh

Has ever fallen from my cautious lips.

MORE. It was not meant for judgment but for truth.

MARGARET. May it not be, my father, we need fear  
No judgment but of Truth ?

MORE. And have you found  
In your devotion, Meg, the truth of that ?  
I would all daughters were as you have been.

MARGARET. I would all fathers such as you were free  
Of the dark dangers of the Court and State !

ROPER. Said the King aught to grieve your spirit,  
sir ?

MORE. You heard his words, the final words he spoke  
At which I cried aloud and angered him :  
' The English Church '—what church can be  
but God's,

The universal church of Christendom,  
The age-old faith our fathers gave to us ?  
Can this small island rear its thought alone,  
Unanchored to the Pope's authority ?  
This question, like a cloud-bank, curled about  
me :

What answer could my conscience give but  
one ?

MARGARET. What new commandment has he laid upon  
you ?

- MORE.       None, daughter, none. But all his course is  
              fixed,  
              And who can see the end of such resolve ?  
              He knows my thought concerning Mistress  
              Anne,  
              He gave me freedom of will about the bond  
              Of matrimony unhallowed that he seeks—  
              And, let me tell you, in a headstrong prince  
              That marks a generous mind. But that is  
              past ;  
              Already are we moving far beyond.  
              The ship of state, storm-racked and rudderless,  
              Drifts to a jagged shore. Our royal master  
              Now seeks to make the Church of God his  
              thrall  
              And name himself its head supreme on earth.
- MARGARET.   Even so, even so ? Then evil breaks upon  
              you !
- MORE.       Nay, but, my daughter, let your thoughts be  
              light  
              As the leaves of autumn fluttering down the  
              breeze.  
              There is no happiness to equal Hope,  
              And that is always ours. Much may arise  
              To change the trend of destiny : the Queen  
              (God be her shield) may die and all this coil  
              Be straightened out by patience into peace.
- MARGARET.   You bade me, husband, keep a valorous  
              heart—  
              And then comes this !
- ROPER.       Your father knows not fear.
- MARGARET.   When did he ever whilst his conscience spoke ?  
              Oh, sir, assure me !

MORE.

Dear daughter, if I could.

Let us at least not march upon despair.

The King is resolute, but he may change ;

The causes of his purpose may dissolve.

MARGARET.

Do you speak of royal Henry ? When was  
he known

To dam the fiery current of his will

Or feel a moment's mercy from his pride ?

MORE.

Love makes you grim, Meg. Let us look  
beyond.

We take too brief a survey of our lives.

The fate of England is not in one man,

Not King nor Chancellor—nor Cardinal :

I was in grief to hear smooth Cromwell's  
words ;

Wolsey was never born to pass away

In clouded state, all weighted with disfavour :

His mind was so unready—and his soul.

Glorious was he, far above all measure,

And that was pity, for it did great harm,

Made him abuse the many noble gifts

That God has given to him. May he be  
saved !

MARGARET.

How can you speak so calmly of a fate

That is overshadowing you ?

MORE.

And so you make

Your father kin to Wolsey ! I am honoured :

I had not thought my household here could  
show

Such likeness to his long magnificence ;

I had not thought—to speak in graver tones—

That I would barter all my hopes of Heaven

For worldly wealth and grandeur, even as he.

No, Meg, I trust there is no parallel.  
Let come what may, I will not be so unwise.  
That could you never be !

ROPER.

MORE.

I cannot hope

To lay a claim to anything but this,  
In spite of all your love : I will not bring  
Dishonour to you ; I will never feign  
An ignorant mind to answer this one question,  
How can a man obey an earthly King  
Above the King of Kings ? Be of good heart :  
A thousand breaths may chance upon the wind  
To change the royal purpose : let it be.  
Night gathers soon enough ; we need not fear  
If at our bedside shines the eternal light.

MARGARET.

That is, I know, the bravery of wisdom ;  
And yet——

MORE.

And yet we live and whilst we live  
Our hearts are human, weighed with anxious  
fear

For those we love. Let us then gaze beyond.  
I see a vision of a later age  
When all uncertainty is rolled away,  
A voyage of confusion and of hope.

MARGARET.

How can those two be one ?

MORE.

I cannot say :

I am no prophet dreaming in a cave,  
Only a statesman thinking from his heart.  
A day will come when neither Kings nor  
statesmen——

Nor Cardinals who ape the double rôle—  
Will sway, as now, men's destinies.

MARGARET.

But when ?

MORE.

Again I cannot say, but come it will.



It is the common people of the earth,  
The potter's clay that is each human soul,  
The humble toilers on this moving globe  
Who will one day be its inheritors.  
And Kings will be their servants : all will  
bring  
Their goods, their enterprises, and their crafts  
To be divided for the good of all.  
All men will labour and the minds of all  
By learning will be kindled : the broad light,  
Old knowledge claimed afresh, new learning  
won  
That like the dawn is breaking now on earth,  
Will in that hour be universal day.  
But I am harking backward : you remember  
Something of this with younger mind I wrote  
But as an aspiration and a plan.  
A dreaming pen was mine when Peter Giles  
Heard my creation, Raphael Hythlodæ,  
In curious discourse on the ideal state :  
I smile to think on it now. Utopia !  
That will not be whilst men of moment feed  
Their minds upon the vanities, the dross  
That grows along the earth's material ways.  
And yet I must believe that it will come  
In the times to be hereafter before God.  
The pomps, the glories of this coloured age  
Will surely pass : all will not be, I know,  
As once in manhood's eagerness I dreamed.  
Imagination's golden prime outruns  
The slow march of mankind, but all things  
change,  
Change onward and change upward, I believe.

It well may be the future world will hold  
 Women for heroes, and poor women too,  
 The mothers of the race—take comfort, Meg !

MARGARET. My father jests : he keeps a merry mind  
 In the midst of all foreboding.

MORE. I have jested :  
 I have enjoyed the rapiers of men's minds—  
 That prince of talkers, friend Erasmus, first,  
 Fisher and Colet, aye, and many another—  
 The ball of phrases and the flash of wit,  
 As much as most that live—I do not jest  
 In sharing now this vision that is mine.  
 The past is past and answers for itself,  
 The present has a gladness all its own  
 But for the nonce is ravelled : we are wise,  
 Dear Meg, son Roper, I, we three together,  
 We are not birds in a cage, we have our minds.  
 The future has a pretty sound to me :  
 I am full of questions in it.

ROPER. Full of courage.  
 I never knew you greater than this hour

MORE. When the clouds gather and the long eclipse.  
 I thank you for your courtesy, but pay me  
 No tribute but a lowly sense of right,  
 A mind to balance rivals, that which runs,  
 Is broken into fragments by a breath,  
 By a courtier's malice or a royal frown,  
 And that which outlasts empires and is  
 ours,

Is every man's who knows it for the truth.  
 What is the lasting music of the world ?  
 What makes our happiness along the vale ?  
 What lights us on to Death ? Is it the power

We may have grasped, the pomp, the outward  
show,  
Or is it all the little things of life  
That make a man? We know the answer  
well—

It were great shame to be afraid to answer—  
Courage and love and, more than either, faith,  
The greatness that is God within our souls.

MARGARET.

You do not jest, my father, any more.

MORE.

I am grown serious : I would not be so.

I trust to keep a smile whatever comes  
And make of Death a friend. What grieves  
me more

Than any hindering load Life has for me  
Are these wild vapours clouding out our God  
From the sight of humble men, these heresies,  
Malignant insects of impiety,  
That sting our earth to madness. They must  
pass.

Why should the spread of knowledge make  
for error?

We need more resolution ; we must stand—  
Even if it came to pass all fell away  
And left us in our inspiration last—  
The firmer for the windy challengings  
Of God's dominion here.

ROPER.

And the King's service?

MORE.

This is no hour for weakness or for words.  
I serve my Lord the King, loyally I serve him,  
But no persuasion and no force of ill  
Shall ever cast the storm-cloud of its fear  
Between me and my God !—Forgive me,  
Meg ;

Your loving tributes must accept the blame.  
I have not the humour, as you know right  
well,

For stateliness of strut or swollen speech.  
A jest is better and it shall be mine.  
The dark draws on apace and I must labour ;  
I left my table at the King's approach  
High piled with papers and my wit is out  
If this noon's converse does not add to them  
As rain the river. There is much that calls me.  
I am among the last to know the world  
As our forefathers knew it when the Church,  
The holy mother of our ancient faith,  
Shone as the sun with never a questioning eye  
To gaze on her undazzled : Christendom  
Was all united in the heart of God. |

A grievous change, a most unstable world !  
And I must labour with a mind unclogged  
By all the little dustiness of self  
To balance it and bring it back to strength—  
Whilst I am in it. Let it not be said  
That I grow indolent as I grow gray ;  
Leave me, I pray you, to this last ambition,  
Let me be called a king of Chancellors  
In monarchy of mind—Come, kiss me, Meg,  
And banish tears ; draw close to me and  
whisper

What is for supper : must we not eat to live ?

[*'A Cup o' Tea: To-day' will be published in December.*]

*GUILT.*

BY LORNA BRADE.

ABU AHMED looked round furtively into the darkness and held his breath to listen. Only the gentle lapping of the Orontes a few yards away and the distant croak of a sociable group of frogs broke the silence of the night. Above him stretched the rich network of innumerable stars, and all around loomed vague, shadowy masses, which his practised eyes did not fail to distinguish and identify. Satisfied that no one was within earshot, he bent down over the rock and dragged from its recesses a large and heavy bundle. He arranged the sack over his shoulder with some difficulty and, stopping again for a second to listen, made his way over the rough ground in the direction from which he had come.

After an hour and a half of heavy going, Abu Ahmed drew near to the group of tents which formed the Bedouin encampment. Here caution was necessary if he was to get to his tent unseen and unheard. He circled half-way round the encampment, then, like a cat stalking its prey, slowly made his way to one of the brown tents of straw-matting and camel-hair.

Now he was safe, Allah be praised. Quietly, so as not to rouse the other occupants of the tent, he placed his burden under the rugs and matting which formed his bed, and having covered it as satisfactorily as was possible in the darkness, lay down to rest. The day had held enough dangers. The next morning he would see the Christian merchant who would buy his burden from him, and there

would, indeed, be enough risks to run when the time came. But what was a poor man to do, so scarce was money this year? Either risk your life or starve. It was a bad world, ya Rab-by, it was a very bad world. He drew his thick woollen *abbayya* around his legs, and in a few moments fell into a deep sleep.

The day was just breaking, and already the little encampment was stirring. A hen screeched and flapped about his head and Abu Ahmed awoke with a curse. A woman with tattoo-marks on the whole lower portion of her face rushed into the tent and tried to seize the terrified animal. The commotion in the tent was in no way different from those of the previous day or week, the animal and human sections of nomadic society having at all times a tendency to get in each other's way. The hen continued to screech and dogs outside began to bark. The repartee between the man and woman was neither elegant nor edifying, and a few more voices from the other side of the partition added to the liveliness of the vituperation.

Suddenly Abu Ahmed noticed that the woman had not answered his last thundering curse, but was staring with open mouth at the edge of his bed. Slowly she turned and, without a word, left the tent. The unfortunate hen, left to her own devices, recovered her composure and eventually found her way out to her companions.

It was not for several seconds that Abu Ahmed thought of looking for the object that had attracted the woman's attention. Looking now at the bed beneath him, he saw a sight which caused him to hold his breath for horror. Protruding from the bedding was a small portion of the sack which he had hidden there the previous night, and sticking out of the sack was the unmistakable hind leg of

a wild boar. Ah, Horror and Woe ! . For a dead pig to be discovered in his tent ! What worse thing could have befallen him ! Abu Ahmed had no doubts as to the effect of the discovery. This unclean animal, detested of all good Moslems, defiled not only the hand that touched it, but the whole tent and encampment in which it lay. He had hoped, in his miserable poverty, to sell it for a good price to the Christians who traded in pig-flesh, even as he had done a number of times before when the great drought had almost brought him and his family to starvation. But now, what a catastrophe !

He did not deceive himself : to remain meant death ; there would be no mercy. A heavy price for his carelessness, indeed ! Rapidly he reviewed the alternatives. To remove the dead boar was impossible at this time of day ; to leave the tent alone would mean that it would be immediately examined and the animal discovered. He decided to go, but he knew from experience that news in the camp travelled like the wind, and, as if by magic, from one encampment to another. His only hope lay in immediate escape before the news had spread : he would travel faster than the words of his enemies. And so, without giving a thought to irrelevant details, he walked out of the tent into a hostile world.

The camp was strangely silent. Abu Ahmed passed a circle of Bedouin seated on the ground ; and the dull clang of the wooden mortar, as they pounded their coffee beans, had for him an ominous sound. They hailed him to join them for coffee, but with a hasty greeting he hurried past, not daring to think what conjectures his departure must be provoking. He hastened across the rough piece of land which surrounded their settlement where a few camels were grazing, and reached the little road that led to the village.

Abu Ahmed was thinking only of immediate needs : the distant future of the morrow and the day after did not worry him. He had no money, but his needs were few. His chief fear was to be alone without his tribe and kin, and, as he followed the road up the hill, a plan gradually formed itself in his mind. A few days before, he had had occasion to pass through Selemiyyeh and had found a group of his people encamped about a mile to the north. He could get help from them, and then, perhaps, go on to Hama. But it was a good day's journey.

It was nearly midday, and Abu Ahmed was tired and hungry. The sun beat down on the dusty road and did not add to the traveller's comfort. He looked around for a resting-place, and finally made for the scanty shade of a stunted tree. He lay down and was asleep in a few minutes. When he awoke, the sun was well past its zenith, and he hastened to reach his destination before nightfall.

He had been going several hours when he spotted a line of camels moving across the hillside, evidently following a road which joined his own farther along. When he reached the cross-roads, he waited for the camels to arrive, and, as they drew nearer, noticed with satisfaction that the men seated on the beasts were the very friends he was hoping to find.

Cries of greeting and welcome filled the air, and, as Abu Ahmed took his seat on one of the riderless camels, the questions, the news, the gossip were shouted up and down, from rider to rider, along the slow-moving caravan, to the tune of the jingling camel bells.

Near the village ran a stream, and the men got down to drink. The water was not good, but they had frequently tasted worse. After they had drunk their fill, they sat in a circle by the water's edge.



It was an hour before sunset, and the evening was calm and cool. A heavy man with a long, bony face was speaking, and the glint of his black eyes intensified the horror of his story. The terrible drought of the previous winter, when cattle died by the roadside and camels had to be sold for a few pounds, had brought ruin and starvation to many, and tragedies abounded in these regions along the desert border. The narrative was in full swing when one of the men quietly left the circle and went to attend to the camels.

Now another man, an old wizened fellow with a wart on his nose, was telling his tale while his little audience sat round, absorbed and tense. Suddenly there was silence. Abu Ahmed felt a sharp pain in his back, and then, before he could cry out, fell forward with a groan. He moved no more.

Their work was done: the circle broke up. Silently the riders mounted their kneeling camels, and once more the procession set off along the track. Countless particles of dust reflected the glory of the setting sun, and only the sound of bells broke the stillness of the evening air as the line of camels wound its way towards the horizon.

*Beirut, Lebanon.*

## TOLL FOR THE BRAVE.

BY W. J. BLYTON.

It has been my lot to be near to or present at the passing of a number of valued daily journals and of humane magazines and reviews, most of them victims of the post-War wave of economy, fashion and the whim for 'amalgamation.' Each event grieved many thousands of friendly readers in the land, who, however, had no opportunity of protest or appeal—so swiftly were the sentences executed, so impersonal and withdrawn was the tribunal.

With the daily organs of opinion I will be brief, the better to enter the fascinating ground of the old-style magazines. The latest to disappear was, as it happens, one for which some of the most illustrious pens of their day wrote on political topics: the *Morning Post*, to which Coleridge and Wordsworth contributed. The voice of the Samurai of conservatism is henceforth either silenced or blended into that of the more flexible *Telegraph* with its memories of G. A. Sala. Readers of dailies as such perhaps have not the fond retentive memories of magazine-lovers, so that one need not extend this elegiac note further back than to the disappearance of the *Tribune* before the War. The query 'Why?' is here insistent, and unanswered to the satisfaction of onlookers, in this as in other cases. T. P. O'Connor's evening *Sun* vanished below the horizon; and the *Evening Times*; and the *St. James's Gazette*, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and the *Globe*, leaving Greater London and the Home Counties with but three evening papers, and fewer opinions, criticisms and articles to choose among.

Not least of the evening's losses was the once welcome green *Westminster Gazette*, in which Spender drew round him some of the best writers with some flair for journalism, as Greenwood (an early discoverer, with the CORNHILL, of Thomas Hardy) did on the *Pall Mall*. True, the *Westminster* was turned into a morning paper, and thus lived on awhile precariously until subsumed (allow me this periphrasis) into the *Daily News*, which however itself had to change its name when it in turn absorbed the *Daily Chronicle*. Both these last feats of digestion came as a shock to the unprepared staffs; and the offices were the scenes of somewhat sad dramas when their dispensability was suddenly announced. None, from editor to junior reporter, could see the dire necessity of such 'patriotic suicide': were not their circulations good by any reasonable standard? Standards, however, are altering: some advertisement and revenue departments to-day regard a half-million purchasers as a clique, not a public.

On this stricken field I had nearly forgotten to recall that the *Morning Leader* had fallen, though made gay and pugnacious by Spencer Leigh Hughes and other gallant pens; then the *Daily Citizen* gave promise, but was unable to fulfil it. Nor are these more than a selection of the tragedies of what has been called the Street of Adventure, of Ink, of Doom, and of Disillusion, but which shows no sign of lacking its recruits from Scotland, Lancashire and the North, the Midlands and the west country. And do my readers remember the distinctive, friendly and refreshingly un-vulgar *Daily Graphic*, with its line drawing as frontispiece of the classic feminine figures listening, at either end of a string of cherubs, to the day's weather news whispered through the winged imps? That picture was familiar to many of us from early childhood, raising an expectation,

never disappointed, of the principal news of the day within, presented by gentlemen for gentlefolk ; delightfully apart from mass-produced 'hot stuff' journalism. Even where *The Times* was likewise taken, there was a blank on the hall table of many a country house, or professional man's desk. The undemonstrative world and his wife were painfully bereaved. I was in the homely, picture-crowded offices at Tallis-House, when the decree of extinction at short notice went forth ; editor, leader-writer, maker-up, artists—none thought of himself primarily, but how would the world look without the *Daily Graphic* ? To some, as changed as Piccadilly without hansom cabs and hobble skirts.

And now to the famous monthlies and quarterlies of general appeal. The sole survivors, happily vigorous, are the CORNHILL MAGAZINE, the *Quarterly Review*, *Chambers'*, *Blackwood* and the *Dublin*.

But consider 'absent friends.' Gone are *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, of which Thomas de Quincey was an ornament, being in fact transferred with family and library to Edinburgh so that the editor could be surer of this capricious genius's 'copy' ; and *Fraser's*, and *Macmillan's*, and *Longman's*, and the *Edinburgh Review*, and others which will be named, to which there contributed Froude, Macaulay, Carlyle, Jeffrey, Andrew Lang and Stevenson ; gone also the *Westminster Review* founded by Bentham and written for by George Eliot, G. H. Lewes and Harriet Martineau. One would call them 'the higher journalism,' but the phrase implies a distinction between good journalism and literature which is more conventional than real.

A paragraph may be permitted about the simple archetype of to-day's magazines. Montaigne's father had the ingenious idea of issuing small papers making known the wants of individuals to each other, rather like our *Exchange*

*and Mart and Notes and Queries.* At the same time, bill-posting became general under the name of *affiches*. But spread out on my desk—and indeed on the rugs around me—I have originals and facsimiles of the first genuine journals and reviews; and they happen to be Elizabethan English. May I show the reader, as well as I can—not the Warrant for the Execution of Mary Queen of Scots, 1587, in agitated spidery script over three pages foolscap, with Elizabeth's masculine signature, but—the *English Mercurie* of July 23rd, 1588, 'published by Authoritie for the prevention of false Reportes' from Whitehall: 'Earlie this Morninge arrived a Messenger at Sir *Francis Walshingham's* Office, with Letters of the 22d from the Lorde High Admirall on board the *Ark-Royal*, containinge the following materiall Advices.' And it tells, in a little over a thousand words, of the 'Armado'; how Captain *Fleming* 'who had been ordered to cruize in the Chops of the Channell, for Discoverie, descried the *Spanish Armado* near the *Lizard*'—'Galleons and Galleasses, of a Size never seene before in our Seas, and appeare on the Surface of the Water like flotinge Castles.' Eighty English craft hung on to their hundred and fifty. From Ostend a correspondent says 'Nothings is now talked of in these Partes, but the intended Invasion of *England*,' and describes the dispositions of the Prince of Parma. However, 'we hope by the Grace of God to prevent from landinge one Man on *Englishe* grounde.' This was imprinted at London by Christ. Barker, her Highness's Printer.

I see next *The Newes* 'published for the Satisfaction and Information of the People. With Privelege. July 6, 1665,' orders against the spreading of the Plague; under the headings of Examiners, Watchman, Searchers, Chirurgeons, Nurse Keeper, Airing the Stuff, Shutting up of the House,

House to be marked and watched ; and it ends with a twenty-line advertisement of a Powder 'of sovereign effect' to be burned into a Fume. 'Packets' of news followed in James I's time, such as News from Hull (where a Packet is incorporated in the present daily), Truths from York, Warranted Tidings from Ireland, the Scots Dove, the Parliament Kite ; and Cromwell carried a printer with his troops to Leith. In 1662 the *Kingdom's Intelligencer* marked an advance ; and L'Estrange tried his venal, versatile hand until the rise of the *London Gazette*, first printed at Oxford because plague still ravaged the capital. Undaunted, he started later the *Observer*, and became licenser of the press ! In 1685 came the *County Gentleman's Courant* and ten years later the *Flying Post* ; 'at the Rising Sun, in Cornhill.'

So much for the ancient dailies and weeklies. The magazines are even more attractive. At first 'magazine' meant a depository of extracts from newspapers ; but from this, the *Gentleman's Magazine* departed. It was begun in 1731 by Mr. Edward Cave, a printer, whose success brought a rival in 1735 in the *Literary Magazine* owned by Mr. Ephraim Chambers, and it lasted through that century. The reigns of the second and third Georges saw the *London Magazine*, the *British Magazine* and the *Town and Country*. In 1739 Edinburgh added the *Scots Magazine*. At last Englishmen and their writers were groping toward the model which to-day we possess. Although Defoe's *Review*, begun in 1704, was, strictly speaking, the first English serial, it was not till the *Tatler* of Addison and Steele that our periodical literature was well under way. The *Spectator* bettered it : this gave us Sir Roger, Will Wimble, and that delightful group, and many a noble disquisition. And now nearly every literary man aspired to be a magazine founder, editor or contributor. The *Lay Monastery*, the *Censor*, the *Free-*

*thinker*, the *Plain Dealer*, the *Champion*, had their short day. Thirty-five years after Addison's experiment appeared the *Rambler*, mostly from Dr. Johnson's hand, twice weekly for two years. Richardson held it equal to the *Spectator*, and Young was nearly as cordial; Prince Frederick ordered seven copies for Leicester House. Though only twopence, it hardly attained a circulation of five hundred; yet when its essays were bound, the edition rose to thousands, and Johnson's style and topics became the craze. One remembers how in 'Cranford' one of the lady characters, hearing an extract of Dickens, considered that 'it in no way equalled Dr. Johnson.' And in truth there is a beauty in his manner and matter; and a sense of moral character in his *Revolutions* of a Garret, in *Squire Bluster* and *Mrs. Busy*. He himself, in his *Life of Blackmore*, has some acute remarks on magazines apropos the thrice-weekly *Lay Monastery* by Blackmore and Hughes. When the *Spectator* stopped, they considered the polite world as destitute of entertainment, and invented the symposium or club idea—later to be elaborated by W. H. Mallock in 'The New Republic,' by Peacock in his social satires, and others. The *Guardian* had its day also.

Henry Mackenzie, 'the man of Feeling,' and no inconsiderable writer, friend of Scott and the Edinburgh intelligentsia, was principal contributor to the *Mirror* and *Lounger*, while Scott himself was happy to appear between periodical covers. Smollett was a born journalist too, and showed a spirited pair of heels in the *Critical Review* and the *British Critic*. Beloved Goldsmith must also try his hand, in the *Bee*, 1759, of which only a few numbers appeared. On his 'first attempt to address the public in form,' he felt himself 'a whimsically dismal figure . . . a man of modesty, who assumes an air of impudence—who, while his heart

beats with anxiety, studies ease and affects good humour.' His cheerfulness is damped with apprehension . . . 'I was at a loss whether to give the public specious promises, or give none. . . . A *bon mot* that might be relished at White's may lose all its flavour when delivered at the Cat and Bagpipes in St. Giles's. . . . However, I assure the reader I was never yet possessed of the secret at once of writing and sleeping.' The essays rescued from this work are few, but exquisite. To be a great author does not constitute a man a great editor.

One day in 1802 Sydney Smith, meeting Brougham and others at Jeffrey's house, took the fancy of the circle by suggesting the *Edinburgh Review*, which later was to give Macaulay's essays as well as Smith's own, Jeffrey's and Horner's. London in 1809 began the *Quarterly Review*, which ever since has grown in favour and influence. For many years John Gibson Lockhart, Scott's brilliant son-in-law, was editor, and many of the ablest articles, of biography and criticism, were from his hand. He was preceded in the editorship by William Gifford, the translator of Juvenal, and author of the 'Baviad' and 'Mæviad,' which dictionaries of literature remark as caustic satires. It is amusing now to look across the years and hear Hazlitt's shrill resentment at politics which, because they were anti-revolutionary, were not his. But Mr. Murray, after consulting Canning and other Cabinet Ministers, founded the *Review* precisely to be an arrow-head of reasoned constitutionalism. Hazlitt also resented Gifford's success, and his deep knowledge of the Elizabethans. Southey, in his serene and lucid prose, wrote much in the *Quarterly Review* in defence of Christianity: his contributions were no fewer than ninety-four, and how seriously he took his great platform is told by De Quincey in 'Reminiscences of the Society of the Lakes,'



where he is compared with Gibbon ; both were industrious scholars, living amid books and select congenial associates by a beautiful lake amid mountains. ' Like Gibbon he was the most accomplished litterateur amongst the erudite scholars of his time, and the most of an erudite scholar amongst the accomplished litterateurs.'

Sir Walter Scott, when king of English letters, became a pillar of the *Quarterly* ; and in this way. A number of the *Edinburgh Review* which contained a condescending critique by Jeffrey on 'Marmion,' had also a paper on current politics which made the shrewd Mr. Murray calculate that the alliance could not last, since, he said, 'Walter Scott has feelings both as a gentleman and a Tory which these people have wounded.' An article on the Spanish situation, which we to-day would describe as defeatist, was the last straw, and Scott withdrew his subscription. In 1808 Mr. Murray saw Scott in the North, invited him to join himself, Canning, Southey, Heber, Ellis, and Hookham Frere. Scott was even offered the editorship. It was a brilliantly inspired offer. Yet Scott was wise to refuse. It would have been a piling of Pelion upon Ossa ; and the responsibility, added to Scott's own *furor* of creative work, would have brought his breakdown earlier. Still, as Lord Tweedmuir has recorded, 'some of his best essays appeared in its pages, for Scott, like other men of letters, had to have some outlet for episodic work, *causeries* which were often the expansion of his table talk. He was always a kindly and courteous critic.' Conservative in the best sense, Scott's change of allegiance in this war of Reviews was inevitable ; 'the brusque complacency of Jeffrey,' as the same authority adds, 'which made Wordsworth's toe itch for his hinder parts, was bound sooner or later to revolt a man of Scott's fundamental reverence and deep historic sense. To the

illuminati of the *Edinburgh*, as to the illuminati in every age, such simple emotions were scarcely intelligible.' Scott once defended the historic framework of his tale 'Old Mortality' in the *Quarterly* when it was attacked by the 'learned and unreadable McCrie'; the literary criticism in this paper was provided by Erskine.

Later came the CORNHILL. Trollope tells us of the fortunate inauguration of this magazine on January 1st, 1860, with Thackeray as editor: 'It was a good name with which to conjure. Something was to be given for a shilling very much in excess of anything they had ever received for that or double the money. "Framley Parsonage"—or rather, my connection with the CORNHILL—was the means of introducing me very quickly to that literary world from which I had hitherto been severed by the fact of my residence in Ireland. Then I first met many men who afterwards became my most intimate associates: Thackeray, Sir Charles Taylor, Robert Bell, G. H. Lewes and John Everett Millais. Millais was engaged to illustrate "Framley Parsonage," but this was not the first work he did for the magazine. It made me very proud.' In the next year he wrote for the CORNHILL 'The Struggles of Brown, Jones, and Robinson,' a satire on the ways of trade. 'I think,' remarks Trollope, 'there is some good fun in it, but I have heard no one else express such an opinion. The publisher kindly remarked he did not think it was equal to my usual work.' He lived to do other wonderful, characteristic English work for the magazine.

When the CORNHILL was six months old, Thackeray tells us exultingly what had happened: it had a sale of over one hundred thousand. 'I salute the symbol of the goddess Fortune with a reverent awe. . . . What banner is there like that of Cornhill? More than a hundred thousand

purchasers—and I believe as many as a million readers. To these have we said an unkind word? We have enemies; have we hit them an unkind blow? Have we sought to pursue party aims, to forward private jobs, to advance selfish schemes?’ Thackeray’s editorial policy was neatly put by him to Trollope: ‘You can help in other ways besides tale-telling. Whatever a man knows about life and its doings, that let us hear about. You must have tossed a good deal about the world, and have countless sketches in your memory and your portfolio. One of our chief objects in this magazine is the getting out of novel spinning, and back into the world.’ Yet many a good novel has there made its first appearance, not least Thomas Hardy’s ‘Far from the Madding Crowd,’ and in our day Eden Phillpotts. Others recall the ripe reminiscences of A. C. Benson, ‘The Leaves of the Tree.’

Dickens was a good editor too, but the periodicals associated with his name have, alas, not lived on. Outwardly his career parallels many in Fleet Street to-day: after a short engagement on the *True Sun*, he joined the *Morning Chronicle*, contributed to the *Old Monthly*, became editor of *Bentley’s Miscellany* (in which he printed ‘*Oliver Twist*’ serially); then, after his American tour and ‘*Martin Chuzzlewit*,’ established and edited the *Daily News*, a heavy task from which he retired again to fiction, until he undertook to conduct *Household Words*, which became his own property under the title *All the Year Round*. But what labour and emotional stress are condensed in that life-sentence! Here, too, though the periodicals have succumbed, posterity is no loser, thanks to book-binding. Once more, the partition betwixt literature and fine journalism vanishes.

Leigh Hunt, poet and humanist primarily, lover of his fellow-man, was an ‘addict’ of the miscellany habit. While

still a youngster, he wrote theatrical criticisms for the *Traveller* (soon after merged in the *Globe*), modelling himself on George Colman in the *Connoisseur*. With his brother he founded the *Examiner*, aggressively reformist ; and a fourth ministerial prosecution obtained the brothers two years' imprisonment and a £500 fine each, for libel on the Prince Regent. For the following seven years he translated, versified, and gave us the flower of his essays in the *Indicator*, and 'Wishing-Cap Papers' for the *Examiner*. I particularly treasure the bound numbers of the *Leigh Hunt's London Journal* 'to assist the inquiring, animate the struggling, and sympathise with all,' from the first issue on April 2nd, 1834 ; priced at three-half-pence, it is more a magazine—on the modest scale of eight pages—than a paper. It is yellowing now, but is very legible ; and the eager, kind, helpful soul of Hunt looks out from almost every page. In his opening Address, his plan is : one original paper every week from the editor ; a weekly abstract of some popular or otherwise interesting book, the spirit of which will be given *entire*, after the fashion of the excellent abridgements in *Johnstone's Edinburgh Magazine* ; and lastly, a brief current notice of the existing state of poetry, painting, and music, and a general sprinkle of notes, verses, and miscellaneous paragraphs.

It is a pleasant fireside companion even at this distance of a hundred and three years. It ought to have gone on and on, as brightly as Hunt himself did. That it did not is another mystery of mortality. 'Pleasure,' he declares, 'is the business of this Journal : we own it : we love to begin with the word : it is like commencing the day (as we are now commencing it) with sunshine in the room. Man has not yet learnt to enjoy the world he lives in ; no, not the millionth part of it ; and we would fain help him

to render it productive of still greater joy. 'Can you put a loaf on my table?' the poor man may ask. No: but we can show him how to get it in the best manner, and comfort him while he is getting it. If he can get it not at all, we do not profess to have even the right of being listened to by him. We can only do what we can, as his fellow-creatures, and by other means, towards hastening the termination of so frightful an exception to the common lot.' These other means took the great-hearted Hunt away from his *forte* into reform and politics; to his honour as a man. So in a degree was it with his friends Shelley, Hazlitt and Carlyle, and perhaps it added timbre to his mind and saved him from dilettantism. Light-weight as he is, he attracts still: Edmund Blunden has written his life and an appraisal. Perhaps he was not of the stature to wrestle with and conquer Time: his flight was the swallow's—brief and swift—and, like the swallow, his day may be over with the summer. No Saul among the prophets, only a David harping before us to charm away the blues. In his time (as 'The Religion of the Heart' shows) he contended with darkness; but it was without dust and noise, gracefully and hopefully as the angel in Raphael's picture grapples with the Fiend. With him we live in an unfallen Eden.

Hazlitt steered clear of editorship and proprietorship, but his militant pen was at friends' service; his 'Round Table' appeared in the *Examiner*, his 'Characters of Shakespeare's Plays' in *Leigh Hunt's London Journal*, and others in the *London Magazine* and *Morning Chronicle*. Briefly, he *did* fall to the temptation of being home editor of the *Liberal*, founded by Byron and Shelley; it foundered after its fourth number. The 'heavenly mingle' of Charles Lamb appeared largely in the *Reflector*, a quarterly with which Hunt was connected, notably the essays on Hogarth and on the tragedies

of Shakespeare ; then in the *London Magazine*, as 'Elia,' alongside what contributors !—De Quincey, Cary, Allan Cunningham, Hood, Keats, Landor, Reynolds, Hazlitt, and Hare. Evidently, genius alone is not the vital elixir for a magazine ; there is some further recipe, the mystery of strategy and conducting. From his book-filled and littered rooms in Lothian Street, Edinburgh, a hundred years ago De Quincey—counteracting opium with tea, and metaphysical reverie by visits from the printer's devil—wrote his elaborate, exciting and melodious prose essays for Knight's *Quarterly Magazine*, the *Edinburgh Literary Gazette*, and Hogg's *Instructor*, as well as *Tait's*.

The *Illustrated London News* has lived from the days of imaginative line-drawings and wood-cuts, illustrating far-away wars, to the present day of special process work ; whereas mysteriously the *Graphic*, in which Hardy's 'Jude the Obscure' first became public, has 'gone on.' The *Yellow Book* of the 'nineties ought to have lived : for it is a mistake in fact to suppose it was 'decadent.' Rather was it virile and experimental ; hospitable to the spirit of Kipling, Shaw, Wells, Chesterton, A. B. Walkley, no less than to Wilde and Beardsley. The solid and informative *Chambers'* has carried on notably. But where are the *Athenæum*, the *Academy*, and W. E. Henley's vigorous *National Observer* ? Gone, or absorbed ; like the yellow-backed *London Mercury* more recently. The feared and admired old-style *Saturday Review* (*Saturday*, for short) suffered a sea-change into something more general and modern ; the *Nation* went the way of the old Liberal Guard ; Cecil Chesterton's *New Witness* left its spirit as a legacy to the independent *G.K.'s Weekly*, now edited by Mr. Belloc and Mr. Jebb ; the *Speaker*, in which 'Q' used to scintillate, is almost forgotten—ungratefully ; the *Tablet*, venerable as to years, is still well informed

and sprightly ; the *Dublin*, which once had the honour of printing Francis Thompson's dazzling essay on Shelley, divides attention between theology, philosophy, scholarship and social science ; the *British Weekly* is old enough for Stevenson to have written in it fifty years ago. He wrote also for the *Idler*, which you may recall was run by Jerome K. Jerome ; till it became a smiling souvenir like his ' Three Men in a Boat.' Wittily R. L. S. recounts how he and three young contemporaries started a magazine ' in a yellow cover, which was the best part of it ; it ran four months in undisturbed obscurity, and died without a gasp. The first number was edited by all four of us with prodigious bustle ; the second fell principally into the hands of Ferrier and me ; the third I edited alone ; and it has long been a solemn question who it was that edited the fourth. It would perhaps be still more difficult to say who read it. Poor harmless paper, that might have gone to print a Shakespeare on.' The lady with whom his heart was engaged at the time looked at it in silence : ' I will not say that I was pleased at this ; but I will tell her now that I thought the better of her taste.'

Tennyson avoided journalism, and indeed prose, keeping to divine verse ; but he gave the *Nineteenth Century* a send-off with a sonnet. The Tennysonian way of saying that the contributors had ' crossed the Street ' is this :

' Now leaving to the skill  
Of others their old craft, seaworthy still,  
Have chartered this . . . to put forth and brave the blast ;  
For some, descending from the sacred peak  
Of hoar high-templed Faith, have leagued again  
Their lot with ours to rove the world about ;  
And some are wilder comrades, sworn to seek  
If any golden harbour be for men  
In seas of Death and sunless gulfs of Doubt.'

The present terms of reference of that review are, I think, sedater than this.

The 'young Toryism' of Austin Harrison's and Douglas Jerrold's *English Review* is merged in the equally lively one of Leo Maxse's *National Review*. The declaration of war in 1914 killed a number of gallant minor enterprises; the *New Weekly* never lived to be old and, like its promising staff, could not fulfil its promise. Paper ran short, and unhappily bullets did not. In London and the provinces many dignified local papers 'joined up'—with more successful rivals; a disappearing trick which persisted after the Armistice.

I have not dealt here with interesting coterie periodicals, which in effect are monthly or quarterly letters to his disciples by some philosopher or poet. One would not quiz the secrets of the Interior People and profane things esoteric. Nor with the dashing and coloured media of current fiction solely ('another powerful instalment,' etc.); they rush past with a noise as of the pursuing gongsters. These are merchandise mainly; and there is a vast retinue behind them which the editors and contributors with genial and disarming candour call 'rags.'

In moments of retrospect and sentiment, however, some of us do regret the diminution of the personal note in titles and tone—*Bell's Weekly Messenger*, *Bell's Life*, *T. P.'s Weekly*, *Leigh Hunt's Journal*. It signed the whole publication, even as articles should be signed. The Editor's name is always reassuring. We should often be more interested and less intimidated if papers bore their owner's name—Lord Berkshire's *Outlook*, for instance; Sir Henry Middlesex's *Daily Guardian*, or Mr. Million Ayre's *Morning Watchman*.



## INDIA AGAIN.

BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL HARRY LEWIN.

## II.

## THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE.

*(This continues the narrative of a winter's visit to India. My wife had not been in that country since she left with her father, Lord Roberts, on the completion of his forty-one years' service in India in 1893, whilst the writer last saw it in 1899 on the outbreak of the South African War.)*

THE Frontier Mail slows down and stops. A whistle and a pause. It is shortly after dawn. We let down the shuttered window of our compartment and look out on a fresh world. We have left the plains of India and are halted in a rocky gorge which rises sheer up on either side not forty yards from the train. We move slowly forward again, and round a bend are confronted by a red iron girder bridge—on to this we slowly clank. It is guarded at each end by a stone-built, double-storied, loopholed block-house, at the gate of which stands a fully armed sentry. Looking down, we see a muddy swirling river, held fast on either side by precipitous rocky banks.

As the train issues from the bridge it turns right-handed along the right, or West, bank—the permanent way being cut into the hillside some hundred feet above the river. We have crossed the Indus and are in the North-West Frontier Province. Across on the East bank we look up at the overhanging fortress of Attock crowning the opposite hill-top. Red serrated and loopholed walls, strengthened

every twenty yards along their perimeter by machicoulis galleries, from which boiling oil and other aids to defence could be hurled on the heads of attackers. A formidable and extensive fortification, worthy of its builder, the Emperor Akbar, who constructed it during the reign of our Queen Elizabeth with a view to safeguarding the junction of the Kabul River, which flows into the West side of the River Indus opposite the fort. It stands magnificently for its purpose—and modern engineers have confirmed the soundness of its siting by bringing the modern railroad across the Indus under its walls. An impressive scene in a romantic locality—for here stood Alexander the Great's bridgehead over the Indus, leading to the plains of India, and every flood of invasion from the North-West has broken through the barrier of hills from this direction. Following the Mughals, Ranjit Singh and his Sikhs held Attock Fort against Afghan invasion for over fifty years, until they in turn, in 1849, yielded the defence of the Indus to the British Raj under men whose names live to this day—the Lawrences, Nicholson, Edwards, the Chamberlains.

It is a calm grey morning after rain, and the landscape stands out clean and clear before us. The train winds on out of the Indus gorge and turns West again as it meets the Kabul River, and proceeds up the valley of that river to the terminus station of Peshawar, some fifty miles farther on. The railway wanders across a broad level plain, well irrigated and cultivated, and, as Peshawar is approached, there is a fine display of orchards on either hand, evidently well stocked and wisely tended in all modern methods of fruit-growing. At the moment most of the trees are in full blossom, adding a wonderful note to the vivid scale of colour of the vale, backed by distant purple hills. Well-built stone villages show here and there—the principal

houses protected by loopholed watch-towers—for we are now in a land where a man's worth is judged mainly by his ability to safeguard his women and property. Even the railway stations we pass are small fortresses, the booking-offices and goods yards surrounded by twelve-foot loopholed walls with only one steel-shod gate for entrance. In something over an hour we arrive at Peshawar, the capital of the North-West Frontier Province.

The administration of this province is perhaps the most interesting of the many interesting problems which confront the British rule in the whole continent of India. A province reaching from Chitral in the North-East to Dera Ismail Khan in the South-West—a distance of some five hundred miles from point to point—its width averaging from a hundred and twenty, to two hundred miles—North of it—the tableland of the Hindu Kush and Central Asia. South, the province of Baluchistan reaching to the Indian Ocean. The sole line of approach to the rich plains of India lies across this five-hundred-mile zone, and its defence is the main—almost the only—problem of the defence of India. Its peace-time administration presents a problem of infinite complexity and difficulty, and is under the control of the Governor with his headquarters at Peshawar. To assist towards an appreciation of this fascinating land let us recall the old rule-of-thumb *aide-mémoire* of our youth, which helped us when studying that ever new, but always old, problem of the North-West frontier. The right hand extended with palm towards us, thumb pointing upwards or to the North, the fingers pointing to the left or westward. Placed thus, the outside limit line to the right of the thumb gives the line of the Indus, while the line of the Kabul River is indicated by the top limit of the first finger. The point where these two lines meet gives Attock. Peshawar lies to

the West on the other side of the thumb. The extended fingers and thumb represent the five main valleys of the hill districts or tribal areas. The thumb pointing North is the Malakand and Swat Valley, leading on to Chitral. The first finger is the Kyber Valley, up which runs the road to Kabul. The second finger is the valley of the Kurram, the third leads to Northern Waziristan, and the fourth to Southern Waziristan. The gaps between thumb and fingers are filled in by some of the highest and most rugged mountain country in the world, inhabited by tribesmen, Afridis, Mohmands, Waziers, Yussufzai and many more, each independent of the other, and owing but scanty allegiance to their tribal rulers or Khans. These hill districts form what are known as the tribal tracts, while the fertile plain represented by the palm of the hand is termed the administered district, the two areas possessing entirely different forms of Government, which, however, are both controlled by the Governor.

These two systems are indeed an interesting commentary on the flexibility of the English rule all the world over. When we cross the Indus the civil administration is little changed from that of the rest of British India. There is an organised system of justice, with a police force, all acting under the normal civil administration of a Commissioner, who administers the particular district under the Governor. As soon, however, as the foothills are reached—only a few miles beyond each of the district headquarters of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, the system of Government changes entirely. British India ceases to exist at the undefined and almost imaginary line running approximately along the lowest slopes of the mountains. Here tribal territory begins. It is in fact a belt of mountainous country some sixty miles broad at its narrowest part, but much wider

in others, which runs between the administered districts and the 'Durand line,'—the line demarcating the frontier between India and Afghanistan. In the tribal areas no organised magistracy exists, and there is no collection of revenue. A British officer—termed the Political Agent—alone represents to the Pathan inhabitants the power of the British Government, typified by the Viceroy and his representative—the Governor of the North-West Frontier Province—from whom the various Political Agents receive their instructions. In its own immediate locality each tribe, under their own Maliks, are a law to themselves, guarding their women and property, and shooting their feud enemies as seems right in their own eyes without fear of intervention by British Law Courts or emissaries of Justice.

Each man—contrary to the law of British India—is armed, and carries his rifle—with a belt of ammunition—slung from his shoulder. Their position in the social scale is judged mainly by the type of weapon they possess. A British-made magazine rifle of latest mark corresponds, more or less, to the top-hat in London, while an older mark is about on the level of the bowler-hat or 'Trilby.' A single loader denotes the young fellow beginning life, who has yet to make his way in the world. Fine, tall, hawk-visaged men with cheery countenances—many of them blue of eye and ruddy of complexion—with jaunty dome-shaped caps round which they wear a whisp of puggaree tied with saucy upward cock on one side—you meet them swinging along the roads or down the hillsides—their sandalled feet moving exactly as Rudyard Kipling describes :

*'He trod the ling like a buck in Spring.'*

They are in truth veritable cocks o' the North—and they know it ! The sole condition laid upon them is that all

military roads through their territory, together with a narrow strip on either side, are considered sacred. No shooting is to take place on the road, and it is not in the rules of the game to pick off your enemy if he happens to be on the other side of the road to yourself. Firing across the road 'is not done'—or if it is, they know full well there will be trouble with their adviser and friend, the Political Agent, who without doubt will call upon their Malik to investigate the affair, and mete out the approved degree of justice, according to the tribal law.

The military roads through the tribal territory are built and maintained by the Government of India, the tribesmen finding the labour, and in many cases even taking up the contract to construct them. At a few vital points along their route, forts to contain as much as a battalion are built, and are held by regular troops of the Indian Army; otherwise the roads are guarded by local militia companies, and in the Kyber the tribesmen themselves are held responsible—supplying the pickets along the route from their own men, who are termed 'Kassadars.' Each Kassadar provides his own rifle, ammunition and clothing, with the exception of a distinctive puggaree given him by the Government. For this duty he receives a daily wage, but nothing more.

A journey up any one of the five valleys of the tribal territory is a glorious expedition. Our courteous host has placed a motor-car at our disposal to-day and suggests that, as it is fine, we should make a trip up the Kyber Pass to the Afghan Frontier. He tells us that his friend the Political Agent of the Kyber territory will be at Landi Kotal, and has kindly offered to do the honours of his constituency for us; and, moreover, the British officers of the Gurkha regiment holding the fort and outpost picquets, have done us the honour of asking us to lunch with them. So off we start,

in bright sunshine and crisp mountain air, and travel out North-West towards the mountains enclosing the first finger of our *aide-mémoire* plan.

The road is a broad fine motor way. There are in fact two, running parallel to each other, one for motors, and one for slower-moving traffic—camel caravans and pack donkeys. Either of these roads would do credit to any District Council Road Committee in England, so well are they laid and graded. The railway line follows much the same course and runs to Landi Kotal, a mile short of the Afghan Frontier, but is not used for normal traffic. It is merely there—ready—in case of need ! Ten miles from Peshawar we pass the Sikh-built fort of Jamrud, and are in tribal territory. Each man we meet now carries his rifle slung from his shoulder, and the stone-built villages look more like forts. Kassadars sit about at vantage-points along the route, guarding the long strings of laden camel convoys or ‘kafilas,’ which we overtake or meet every now or then, making their way up and down the pass—for to-day is an ‘open’ day in the Kyber, when all who desire passage to and fro must move between daylight and dusk.

The road begins to ascend steadily, and winds its way up the pass as the rugged bare hills close in upon the route, and become more and more precipitous. About thirty miles on, we round a sharp bend, and find ourselves upon a small plateau or widening of the pass, upon which stands the fort and various buildings which form the Camp of Landi Kotal. A Gurkha sentry at a barrier gate signals ‘Halt’ to us, and the Commander of the Guard examines our passes and informs us that ‘the Captain Sahib’—by whom he means the Political Agent—has gone on ahead down to the further barrier on the actual frontier. We run on another two miles and pull up beside a waiting motor-car, and are

greeted by the Political Agent, who is engaged in conversation with a group of tribesmen. The subject of their talk, which he subsequently tells us, is interesting. They are Afridis, and they have a grievance. The Government declines to enlist Afridis in the regular Army, although making use of their services as Kassadars. The Army pay and service, however, is more lucrative, and holds out a career, with prospects of promotion and pension, to their young men. Their brothers of the Yussufzai and Orakzai are allowed to enlist, but since the regrettable incidents of the Afghan War in 1919, when they were foolish enough to be false to their salt and throw in their lot with the Afghan invader, the Government has refused to take them into service as soldiers. They had been foolish. They realise the error of their ways. The British Raj is merciful and strong. Would not the Captain Sahib intercede for them to the Viceroy? The Captain Sahib told them they had been bad boys and he would promise nothing, and the conversation broke up with smiles and professions of goodwill and long life to the Captain Sahib, as he turned to greet our arrival.

He led us up a steep path to an eminence from which we could look westward down the pass into the valley of Jalalabad, showing green and fertile at the end of a barren and inhospitable vista of jumbled peaks and rocky slopes lit by brilliant sunshine, which produces broad purple shadows and golden glints of sunlit mountains.

Coming down from this vantage-point we strolled over to the barrier on the road which marks the frontier between India and Afghanistan. Two sentries on the Afghan side were lolling about—dressed in obviously German-made khaki serge uniforms, German steel helmets, rifles and boots. They were unimpressive and compared unfavourably in



physique with the single Kassadar who represented the British Empire on the opposite side of the barrier. He greeted us as we approached with cheery smile, and, in order to show that he understood the civilities as existing among gentlemen—unslung his rifle from the shoulder and brought it to the salute with resounding slap of the hand upon the small of the butt, in a manner that would have done no discredit to a sentry of His Majesty's Brigade of Guards.

A large white notice-board confronted us with the legend in English in bold letters :

### FRONTIER OF INDIA

TRAVELLERS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO PASS

THIS NOTICE-BOARD UNLESS THEY HAVE

COMPLIED WITH THE PASSPORT REGULATIONS.

The Afghans, we were told, are particular that foreigners desiring to visit their country should observe with precision the proper diplomatic usages regarding passports. They watch the road-routes of entry with considerable care to ensure that their regulations are observed. All applications for visas are meticulously scrutinised by the Foreign Office at Kabul before being issued. It behoves the traveller, therefore, to allow ample time between applying for visa to his passport, and the date when he proposes to start on his journey into Afghanistan.

As illustrating the importance attached by the Afghan to the inviolability of his territory, the Commanding Officer of the Gurkha battalion told us an amusing story at luncheon. The incident arose recently during the relief of one of his company picquets by another company. The picquet line consists of small forts or block-houses built on vantage-points along the frontier line, and are held for a week at a time by the companies in rotation. It so happened that after this

particular relief was complete, one of the Gurkha riflemen of the relieved company discovered he had left his mosquito-net behind at the outpost, and—orders being strict on account of malaria that all troops must sleep under mosquito curtains—he determined to return before nightfall and retrieve his property. The route to the block-house lay up a steep valley, down the bottom of which runs the frontier line between India and Afghanistan. The little Gurkha, having regained his mosquito curtain, was making his way back to Landi Kotal fort, when, on rounding a bend, he suddenly found himself on top of a party of Afghan soldiers, sunning themselves on the Indian side of the valley—the Afghan side being in the shade, and therefore perceptibly cooler and less congenial for their afternoon siesta. Surprised as they were on forbidden soil, the Afghans at once realised that bluff was the only game to play, and instantly seized the little Gurkha, carried him forcibly across the frontier, and sent a message to the nearest British picquet to say they had arrested a Gurkha rifleman whom they found wandering in Afghan territory ! The information was immediately carried to the Political Agent, and—*Civis Romanus Sum*—the whole forces of diplomatic action of the British Empire were instantly set loose demanding the return of the King-Emperor's Rifleman. To such good effect was pressure brought to bear by the Political Agent that within twenty-four hours the little Gurkha, with mosquito-net complete, was back in barracks. But his cheery little brothers-in-arms, ever alive to a joke, at once nick-named him 'The Kabuli,' and the joke went fast and furious round the battalion. Later, however, when a wag developed the witticism further by naming the company 'the Kabuli Company' the old Subahdar in command felt it was time to take action. He paraded next morning at orderly room and explained to the commanding officer

that he enjoyed a joke with any man, but when his company received the title of 'Kabuli' as a result of outrageous and unwarranted behaviour on the part of ill-disciplined and ill-trained Afghan troops it was necessary for him, in the interests of the good name of his command, to bring the matter before the notice of the Colonel Sahib. The Colonel Sahib listened with every evidence of pained and sympathetic attention to the Subahdar's complaint, and, as a result, directed the Adjutant to let fall the hint that the 'Kabuli' joke was wearing thin, and the wags of the battalion had better seek new sources of humour.

The lesson, however, stands, and we certainly gathered from our Gurkha hosts that in the Kyber it does not do to be sketchy or slipshod in your actions or words, or you may pay for it with a bullet in the head or a knife under the fifth rib. When returning to your quarters after nightfall let your reply of 'Friend' come quickly and clearly in response to the sentry's challenge 'Halt, hookum dar !' otherwise his rifle may go off without affording you time for detailed explanations. The Kyber is no place for the 'limpin' procrastitute.' Waziristan, owing to the present 'troubles,' is no suitable place for the winter tourist. We therefore had to eliminate the third and little fingers from our tour of the frontier, but the valley of the Kurram—the second finger—was free from the unrest, and we started forth from Peshawar by car the following morning. South across the Peshawar vale, making for the Kohat Pass over the range of the Safed Koh, which runs East and West, dividing the valleys of the Kabul and Kurram Rivers.

About twelve miles from Peshawar the foothills are reached, and we pass the barrier into tribal territory. A few miles farther on we pass through a small village, and we draw up at one of the houses. We are received at the door

by a bearded elder bearing a strong resemblance to the pictures of Abraham as delineated by the old masters. He courteously explains that his friend the Deputy Commissioner Sahib had intimated to him that we would be interested to inspect his rifle factory, and he begged us to enter. A rifle factory other than a Government concern struck us as peculiar, but merely affords evidence of the degree of independence permitted to the tribes of the tribal territory. If they decide to manufacture their own rifles in preference to buying them in Afghanistan and Persia, or stealing them from the Indian Government, it is considered that it is no concern of ours. Rifles the tribesmen must, and will, have, and here was one of them with enough commercial instinct to start a factory to supply the need. Inside we found three Pathans at work on rifle-barrels, on three lathes that could only have been designed by Mr. Heath Robinson. It was amazing to believe that any weapon of precision could be derived from such a source, and yet when we inspected a finished article, which we were assured had been manufactured on the spot, there was, to our uninstructed eyes, nothing that could be found amiss. Repair work was solely in hand at the time of our visit, and possibly this forms the chief task of the factory. It was indeed a strange experience to step out of this most primitive arsenal on to the first-rate military road outside, and continue our journey up the valley in all the same peace and comfort that one proceeds up the Bath road to London on a June morning.

Our route continued to ascend, climbing by steady gradient and magnificently engineered road-making up the mountainside. We met motor-buses and lorries every now and then, laden with passengers and goods. On we climb, swinging round bends and precipitous headlands—sheer walls of rock on one side, and dizzy abysses on the other—

up and up. Ahead we see the line of our road across on the opposite slope of a bottomless valley—and we look below on the winding ribbon we climbed a quarter of an hour ago. It is a magnificent ascent, and we are lost in admiration of the skill of the Royal Engineers and the P.W.D. of India, who are responsible for our frontier military roads.

At last, as our barometer is registering a height in the neighbourhood of six thousand feet, we rise up on to the neck of the pass and look down over the Kohat vale, some four thousand feet below us. At the summit the road is spanned by a handsome stone triumphal arch, known as the Handeysyde Memorial. This was erected some years ago to the memory of Colonel Handeysyde, one of the most famous wardens of the frontier marches, where he was superintendent of the Border Police. He was killed when leading a handful of his men into tribal territory to arrest an outlaw who had raided into the administered territory, and killed, robbed and abducted inhabitants living in that area, and therefore under British protection. The arch was erected by public subscription, to which many of the inhabitants of tribal territory contributed, as testimony of their regard for Handeysyde's outstanding qualities. Beyond the arch, guarding the top of the pass, stands a fort garrisoned by a regular Indian battalion. We halt for a few minutes to admire the magnificent view spread out beneath us, and then begin the descent to Kohat, down an even longer and more dizzy route than that by which we had ascended.

In Kohat we turn westward. Before leaving the cantonment we pass the sad ruin of the little church. This was destroyed by fire only a few weeks previously, and with it unhappily perished many glorious relics, colours and memorials of border deeds of valour. In connection with this regretted conflagration, a splendid tale of the brotherhood

of arms is told. At the time of its occurrence a Sikh Territorial battalion was carrying out its period of two months annual training at Kohat. The destruction of the British place of worship appealed so deeply to the Sikh officers, that, within two hours of the disaster, the churchwarden—the Brigade Major of the Kohat Brigade—received a letter from them expressing their deep concern at the loss which their British Officers had sustained, and enclosing a donation of two hundred rupees, which they offered with all humility in the hope that it might help towards rebuilding the Sahibs' church. The restoration fund of the Church of England church at Kohat is headed, therefore, by the generous donation made by Sikh officers.

It is some forty miles to Kohat from Peshawar over the Kohat Pass, and another hundred or more on up the valley of the Kurram to Parachinar. This cantonment lies some twenty miles short of the frontier of Afghanistan, the route to which runs over the Peiwar Kotal and Spingawi Passes. Most of the road from Kohat lies through tribal territory, but is more hospitable in character than the Kyber. The valley broadens out in many places to a width of some ten miles, bright and colourful with green crops, orchards in blossom, and avenues of trees of considerable variety—ilex, tamarisk, chunar, wild olive and willow, some of the finest cricket-bat willow is grown in the valley of the Kurram ! The arts of husbandry produce peace, so that there are no Kassadar picquets along the road, and although many of the tribesmen carry rifles, it appears to be more in the nature of custom and as evidence of their social standing rather than from any immediate need of personal safety. Motor-buses are fairly frequent, and appear well patronised, while motor-lorries carrying produce to Thal market are numerous. The bullock-cart of India is almost absent, and even the

camel convoy appears to be yielding to the competition of the motor-lorry. Thal, with its large modern fort, lies half-way between Kohat and Parachinar and its market square, through which we pass, is crowded. It certainly appears to fulfil the main function of most market-places, in that it affords an excellent gossip centre for all the countryside. The collection of humanity of all types and tribes made us wish we had time to spend there, if possible, in the company of an expert in tribal folk-lore.

Parachinar has been the headquarters of the Political Agent of the Kurram tribal territory for over forty years. The post has been held by men whose names are bywords along the border. Their leadership shows itself in the marked development of agricultural pursuits of the tribesmen throughout the valley. Possibly this influence is largely due to the fact that the inhabitants, as Moslems, hold to the tenets of the Shia sect, while they are surrounded both on the Indian as well as the Afghan side by the more numerous Sunni believers. This led their chiefs, after the second Afghan War, to appeal for protection to the Indian Government, who responded by creating a Political Agency in the Kurram Valley, with its centre pushed forward close to the Afghan border at Parachinar, where it was in immediate touch with the Shia tribesmen. The success of this overriding authority, maintaining the balance between two opposing lines of religious thought, has proved highly successful, for tribal peace reigns almost uninterruptedly in the Kurram, and every year there is steady improvement in agriculture and trade.

The land round Parachinar is productive. Asparagus, introduced by a Political Agent some ten years ago, now grows wild and propagates itself. Peaches, nectarines, raspberries, apples, pears, oranges—all flourish, as well as ground

vegetables and cereals. There would seem to be few known fruits, vegetables or flowers of temperate zones that the soil of the Kurram Valley is not capable of producing, and the Political Agents for years past have been unremitting in their efforts to encourage the tribesmen in taking up the pursuit of husbandry—their view being that they will thus create markets, which in turn will create extended demands among the tribesmen for comforts and amenities of life. Once a border clansman becomes a horticulturist doing business with India, possibly owning a motor-lorry with which to market his produce and return with goods to meet his enlarged views of comfort, he no longer regards raids from his ancient standpoint as the means of acquiring wealth, but turns his attention to the maintenance of good roads and peaceful conditions of life. In the fruitful soil of the Kurram Valley it is possible to promote such a policy, but farther South, in the inhospitable regions of Waziristan, it is otherwise. Here there is practically no soil, nothing but arid valleys and rocky precipitous hillsides, which cannot support more than a third of the sparse population—who are thus forced to obtain a livelihood from outside sources—which, in tribal circles, means to raid your richer neighbour's garnered stores. Hence the origin of what is euphemistically termed 'unrest' upon the Frontier.

The Kurram Valley formed the line of advance of the central column of the British Army which invaded Afghanistan in the second Afghan War in 1878. This column was commanded by a Major of Artillery—Major (local Major-General) Frederick Roberts, V.C., afterwards Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, and was his first independent command on active service. The present advanced outpost fort of Ali Mangal stands overlooking the site of the camp from which his force set out stealthily at nightfall on its arduous and



long night-march turning movement, by which the Spingawi and Peiwar Kotal passes were captured at dawn, and the routed Afghan Army fled into the valley of Ali Khel beyond. The fort of Ali Mangal forms an important link in the chain of fortified posts held by the Indian Government along the top of the Kurram Valley. They are manned by troops of the Kurram militia, recruited from local tribesmen, mostly of the Turi tribe and therefore Shias by religion. The system of defence in this respect is different from that of the Kyber, in that its defenders are not Kassadars, backed by regular troops, but regularly enlisted militia, clothed and armed by the Indian Government, under their own officers, and commanded by British officers seconded from the Indian Army. A fine body of hillmen, capable of great endurance and knowing every inch of their frontier hills. We found the fort of Ali Mangal commanded by Subahdar Mohamed Akbar, a magnificent handsome Turi, with striking regular features and blue eyes. He looked a veritable leader, and showed us the defences of his command with calm dignity and knowledge. On our way back we met a party returning from a night 'gasht' or patrol. We were informed they had covered about forty miles along the trackless hillsides and valleys of the Durand Line. They were swinging along in grand form—two advanced scouts moving at about ten paces interval along a line of trees, the connecting file a hundred yards or so behind, and the main body—followed by a rear-guard—moving up the valley, keeping stealthy touch with their advanced scouts. They moved rapidly and silently. One quite wished for the sudden flick of a bullet overhead to see how the ground would swallow them up, and they would fling themselves into every possible point of vantage from which they could offer resistance or prosecute their further advance. As they passed on beyond us it was

marvellous to note the quickness with which they merged into the landscape and disappeared from sight.

These evidences of ever-watchful guard appeared almost uncalled-for in such surroundings of beauty and apparent peaceful prosperity—but as we surveyed the extended scene and looked aloft to the snow-capped summit of Sika Ram, rising a sheer 15,000 feet above the valley, glistening in the morning sunshine, beautiful, yet nevertheless scarred by tracks of landslides and avalanches, we realised that man as well as nature suffers from the unexpected. Avalanches of war and revolt have from time immemorial crashed down into India from over those peaks, and we are reminded that even in this twentieth century we live in days when only the strong man, armed, can count on keeping his goods in peace.

Our final expedition was to the locality represented by our thumb—the Malakand and the Swat Valley. This shares in common with the Kurram the blessings of a productive soil. Time was when their inhabitants were as much given to unrest as the tribes of Waziristan, and the famous corps of the Guides held the frontier at Mardan, ready at short notice to deal with eventualities. When, about forty years ago, owing to trouble in Chitral, it was decided to advance our line over the Malakand Pass and gain direct touch with the tribes in Swat, Bajaur and Dir, there were not wanting those who maintained that our action was a menace which could only create unceasing suspicion and hostility on the part of the tribesmen. Happily these gloomy forebodings have not been fulfilled—for among the various activities of the Political Agents to improve the lot of the tribesmen, has been a particularly successful irrigation scheme in the Swat Valley, which has brought such profit to the inhabitants that they are fast developing into the same peaceful cultivators as their brethren of the Kurram.

A cavalry brigade at Risalpur on the Kabul River, with an infantry brigade on the opposite bank at Nowshera, form not only a support to the garrison of Peshawar, but stand to reinforce the troops holding Mardan and the Malakand Pass with the fort of Chakdara beyond.

The Malakand road leaves the grand trunk road at Nowshera and runs North through Risalpur and Mardan, after which it passes into tribal territory and begins to ascend to Malakand. The road winds up in much the same way as that over the Kohat Pass, its surface and construction being of the same high quality we have learnt by this time to expect on all frontier roads. As we approach the Col we pass the new buildings of the Malakand hydro-electric scheme, which, by means of a tunnel with a sharp fall running underneath the pass, harnesses the surplus waters of the Swat River, and will supply electricity power and light to Malakand, Mardan, Risalpur and Nowshera. The Cantonment and defences of Malakand consist of small forts and block-houses crowning the summits of the hills on either side of the pass, while bungalows, buildings and barracks nestle on the reverse slopes and in crannies guarded by the defensible line of forts. It suggests a large group of eagle nests, perched on the topmost crags, and gives the impression of greater height and far wider command on all sides than Landi Kotal in the Kyber. For those who enjoy mountaineering it is difficult to imagine a more delightful dwelling-place than Malakand—for when you step from your house to visit a neighbour a few hundred yards distant, it would seem that it is necessary to undertake a rock climb down—and a rock climb up—that should satisfy the ambitions of the most enthusiastic mountaineer.

Through the pass we descend more gradually into the productive plain of the Swat Valley, the road following generally the line of the Swat canal and river, and bordered

on either side by trees of ilex, tamarisk and willow. The inhabitants are numerous and mostly appear to be occupied in orchards or in the fields. The villages are well built of stone, and the people greet us cheerfully as we pass. Eight miles beyond the foot of the pass the road crosses the river by an iron-girder bridge, and passes under the walls of Chakdara Fort, where we are welcomed by the Captain commanding the two companies of Gurkhas forming the garrison. This is the limit of our pass into the Swat Valley, but the military road continues for another seventy miles up the valley towards Chitral.

Inside the fort we found two deck-tennis courts marked out on the only available level space in or near the fort, and on these the little Gurkha riflemen were playing with the greatest dash and skill. Shouts of laughter and comment proceeded from the onlookers awaiting their turn for a game, and many of the players displayed more than ordinary skill, although their captain told us that by nature the Gurkha is anything but an adept at ball games, and finds at first considerable difficulty in catching the quoit.

From the summit of the fort we obtained a glorious view of the surrounding valley, while the fort commander pointed out to us the main features of the landscape. He, being a keen fisherman, became interested in a small party of his Gurkhas who were engaged below in damming a side-stream, with a view to catching the fish. Left to themselves they would much prefer, he told us, to use a hand-grenade in a deep pool, as being the most speedy and effective method of killing fish. This, however, is strictly forbidden. But they are permitted to dam side-streams, though not the main current of the river, which is reserved entirely for rod-fishing and affords good sport. The little riflemen evidently understood their job well, for after about a quarter of an

hour's work, with much chat and laughter, they had a length of stream almost dry and began deftly flinging a fine number of fish out on to the bank. Life on detachment at Chakdara Fort as we saw it on a glorious day of sunshine and temperate atmosphere would appear a veritable rest-cure—but later with heat radiating from every rock on the hillside, or with the unceasing torrent of the rains, or again in the blizzards of winter snow-storms, it is likely to prove hardly as fascinating as it did to us that afternoon, especially if, in addition to trying meteorological conditions, one happened to be a victim to malaria or dysentery, which are common ills to those who serve the Raj in India.

Our last day at Peshawar Sir George Cunningham, the Governor, most kindly invited to Government House no less than sixteen old officers and men who had served under Lord Roberts in India, or during the South African war, as his orderlies. The old gentlemen had been brought in, many of them from considerable distances in tribal territory, and arrived in a motor-omnibus at Government House. Some were in their old uniforms, wearing their swords, while the remainder were in the civilian dress of their tribe. All proudly wore their medals, but the ribbons of one or two were so perished that they could not be worn upon the breast, but were carefully wrapped and tied in the corner of a cotton cloth, to be produced immediately they were introduced to the Governor. Nearly all were of the Afridi clan, though two were of the Orakzai. Having been helped from their bus they were seated in groups round tea-tables in the verandah, while Sir George moved from table to table, introducing each in turn to my wife as Lord Roberts' daughter, and kindly translating for her into Pushto—for few of them spoke Urdu. Their charm of manner was delightful. Each was intent in explaining when and how

he had met his old Chief—their memory for details and incidents of long ago was remarkable. Occasionally one would make a slip in his narrative and was promptly corrected by his neighbours. One was particularly insistent in his praise of the ‘Good old days,’ when, he explained, there were ‘no aeroplanes and no congress.’ His house, he declared, had been bombed during the ‘troubles of 1897,’ and—with the congress now in power—no one knew what would happen ! It was promptly pointed out to the old warrior by his brothers-in-arms that there were no such things as aeroplanes in 1897, but he adhered to his contention, although he admitted that the damage might possibly have occurred during the course of later ‘troubles.’ Sir George kindly directed him to give all particulars to the Political Agent of his tribal district, and assured him that if the facts were as he stated, he would undoubtedly be indemnified. This gratified the old gentleman greatly, who, like the good soldier he was—having got his grouse off his chest—settled down to enjoy himself over the cakes and tea.

Another fine old officer, who had been taken prisoner at Kut in the late War, told how his captors tried their best to force him to forswear his allegiance to the British Raj, and of the brutal cruelty with which he was treated when he stoutly refused to listen to the temptation.

There was much general conversation and recital of deeds of yore, and the party finally betook themselves to their motor-bus with protestations of loyalty to the King-Emperor and thanks to Sir George Cunningham for his hospitality and regard for the welfare of his people.

Our visit to the North-West Frontier Province was at an end. We said farewell with sincere regret to the rugged land of a rugged and manly people.

[‘*Delhi and The New Constitution*’ will be published in December.]

## FOG.

BY M. A. PEART.

It came as we sat at tea, creeping up the hill between the ornate Victorian houses of the wealthy suburb. The fire in the room was bright, the talk cheerful, the lights lit, and I was unaware of its stealthy approach. I remember once shivering, and my hostess insisting that a window must be causing a draught. One of the many long windows was found to be open. It struck me as ridiculous that I should shiver in that warm room, having always had a passion for fresh air.

As I rose to go the telephone rang, and my hostess left the room. She returned quickly, and said, 'My husband expects to be late. There is dense fog in the town. He has been an hour getting from the station to Briggate. Let me ring for a taxi for you, my dear.'

'Thank you, no. I'd rather walk.'

'Do have one!'

'I'd rather walk, really. I'll start at once.'

They helped me into my coat, and, turning, I faced for the first time the long windows. The fog was rolling up the hill, and the November sun had set. The after-glow lit the rising bank, permeating it with bands of iridescent colour. There was something phosphorescent and repellent in those tints. The effect should have been beautiful, but was lurid, like some decomposing rainbow.

I left the hospitable doors of Tregennis and began the descent of the drive, bordered by heavy hedges of dripping rhododendrons. I was busy plotting in my mind a plan of the suburb before me. I did not know it well, having only

lately come to the town. In fact, I had just used a letter of introduction. There should be a left turn, then an awkward cross-roads, then two right turns. The last should lead down a long avenue to one of the main arteries of the city. From there I thought I could pick my way to my flat fairly easily. I should skirt one of the slums, soon to be cleared, but by sticking to the side railings of the cemetery I was pretty sure I could find my way.

I turned left out of the gate of the drive, downhill, counting the pollard chestnuts that lined the road. Suddenly I stepped into the fog, and began to descend in it. It lapped round me in drifts, dead white, and constantly moving. Each drift was followed by a denser layer of moving cloud. Its chill entered the bones. Its weight pressed on the head and eyelids. It stung the eyes and nostrils. Trees became unsubstantial things, then faded.

I clung to the inside of the pavement, touching the rough stones with my gloved hands, for in this suburb the city magnates dwelt apart, each ensconced behind high garden walls. The street lights came on, and were of no avail. As I stepped into the confused circle of their rays the paving stones appeared to rise up like a wall before my face, falling again suddenly as the fog smothered the feeble gleam.

Occasionally figures stumbled from the fog, panting or shouting words of warning. Once a woman fell against me, clutched my shoulders, apologised, and vanished. More often the voice appeared to be bodiless, the world peopled with shadows. I remembered Beddoes'

*'Voices were heard, most loud, which no man owned :  
There were more shadows too than there were men,  
And all the air, more dark and thick than night,  
Was heavy, as 'twere made of something more  
Than living breaths.'*



When curbs crossed the pavement from the drives of hidden houses I stumbled forward, for so dense now had become the fog that I could scarce see the curb beneath my feet, but seemed to step down into an unsubstantial sea. But I had reached the end of the avenue, and must make the awkward crossing to the right. For a moment I held the trunk of a plane tree, listening intently for warning sound of car or bicycle. There was nothing but the drip of trees, and I stepped off the curb.

Within ten yards I felt uncertain of my direction, within twelve I was lost. I stood still, trying to remember the slope of the hill at the cross-roads, for I was certainly going downhill.

A man's figure loomed out of the fog, almost touching me. It was short and thick-set, burly about the shoulders. He wore a greatcoat of a rather old and uncommon cut. I had not heard his steps, and nearly collided with him. He spoke cheerfully, with a Yorkshire accent: 'Where are ye going?'

'To Mirfield Street first; then one I expect you don't know—Orchard Street.'

'Ah know it. Ye are on the wrong road. Follow me, ah'm going that way meself. Mind t'curb.'

He was so definite, so assured and cheerful, that I followed him thankfully. He had an air of joviality, a sort of rough good humour that put one on good terms even with the fog. I could picture him the centre of a circle in some old-fashioned bar, recounting travellers' tales. I tried to catch a glimpse of his face as we passed the next lamp-post. It was a massive head, the skin red with exposure, the blue eyes slits in the ruddy flesh.

'There's t'convent gate,' he said. 'Mind t'curb. Now we make a crossing. Elm Grove School would be next, eh, wouldn't it?'

'I don't know,' I said. 'I'm a stranger here.'

'Elm Grove School it is,' he said triumphantly.

An excited chatter of treble voices and bicycle bells burst upon us. 'Mother 'phoned she's sending Sarah.' 'Let's wait here.' 'Where's the car?' 'My Dad's coming for me; I'll take you when he comes.'

'Do any of you young ladies want Mirfield Road?' said my guide. 'Ah'm going that way meself.'

They apparently did not hear, or did not deign to answer, but keeping their backs turned continued to chatter like a flock of starlings.

'Best leave them here if their people are sending for them,' I said.

'Aye, that's best,' he said philosophically. He had taken the rebuff in good part, I thought.

'Here's another crossing. 'Untsman Street. Mind t'curb.'

A bell rang, and another figure, wheeling a bicycle, loomed out of the fog. The handlebars hit me.

'Sorry, miss,' said a boy's voice. It was the errand-boy from Eden's, my grocer. 'Are you all right, miss?' he said, quickly recognising me. 'You'll get back all right alone?'

'Thanks, I'm all right. I'm lucky to have a guide.'

He stared at me with a puzzled expression. I said, 'Good night,' and the fog drifted between us.

In a few minutes we heard the exasperated hooting of cars, shouts and ringing of bells, and saw the smothered glow of flares and headlights. Traffic was at a standstill all along the great highway. An ambulance bell was ringing, the driver trying to thread his way through the pack of traffic.

'T'ambulance,' said my guide. His voice sounded

almost exultant with cheerfulness. 'Coom this way. I'll steer you through traffic.'

Between throbbing engines and the dull gleam of headlights, choking with fumes of petrol, we picked our way through the block.

'We'll cut through here,' said my companion, reaching the opposite pavement and turning down a side street.

'Thanks most awfully. I can manage now. I'll go by the cemetery rails.'

He seemed disappointed. 'This way's a champion short cut,' he said.

'Very well,' I answered, feeling I had appeared ungrateful.

We passed down a narrow side street, crossed a road, and came face to face with a row of old-fashioned houses built flush with the street. He padded along by the houses till he reached the entrance of a narrow passage, a doorway without a door. The entrance was dark, and indescribably gloomy. The damp walls reeked of moisture and unclean age. We were going roughly in the right direction, or I should not have entered that passage.

'It's all right,' said my companion, sensing my hesitation, 'we coom out in Cockburn Street.'

We emerged from darkness into a gloomy court. A faint glimmering gas-lamp lit the small circle of sweating flagstones round it. At the base of the lamp-post a half-starved cat crouched, examining a sack. As my companion stooped down to touch it the cat shrank back, every hair on its body raised, and gave vent to a scream such as I have never heard a cat give before, nor ever wish to hear again.

I heard my companion curse, his foot shot out, then with an effort he controlled himself, and said in his jovial voice, 'Puss, Puss, it's all right. Coom on, miss.'

But I had halted by the sack. Something about it held

me. My head swam, my feet were like lead. Under the feeble circle of gas-light the shadows of the sacking suggested the huddled shape of a human form.

There came the tap of a stick down the entry facing us, and the curious halting gait of a lame man. An elderly man emerged into the circle of light, hatless, with thick grey hair, wearing an old military great-coat. One arm hung useless at his side. He pushed by my companion and faced me, standing between us as if at attention. The blue eyes in the worn face met mine squarely.

‘Where do you want to go?’ he said quietly.

‘Orchard Street,’ I said.

‘Then you’re going the wrong way. Turn round, and leave this passage. I’ll follow you.’

From a sense of direction I knew he was wrong; from instinct I knew he was right. I was sick with fear, too sick to question. The screaming animal had torn at once the jovial mask from my former guide. His burly shadow loomed beyond me in the dark entry, and from that passage emanated the chilliest sense of horror I have ever felt. Simultaneously I felt that my feet were free. I turned and stumbled out down the first entry, followed by the tapping stick and halting step of the lame man. Out in the street I leant against a doorway.

‘You’ll feel all right in a minute,’ he said kindly. ‘Yon’s an evil place on a night like this. Now we turn left, and come to the cemetery railings, and work along them.’

But I lingered. ‘That sack!’ I gasped.

‘There was no sack,’ he said, looking fairly at me.

‘Yes, the sack, and the cat!’

‘There was a cat, a poor, half-starved creature. It ran against me as I came in at the entry. But there was no sack. Don’t worry yourself. There was no sack.’

I felt too weak to argue. We reached the cemetery railings in five minutes, and I knew my ground. My companion limped by my side, using his stick. I asked him diffidently if he had been in the War. He said Yes, he had lost his leg and the use of his arm at Ypres. We commented on the sale of poppies on Armistice Day, just over. He was pleased with the result.

‘You’re pretty sure of your way now, I take it, Miss —?’

‘Clive,’ I said. ‘Yes, thanks to you. There is only one more turning, and I know it. And your name?’

‘Gifford. Once Sergeant Gifford.’ He saluted, and crossed the road.

I turned into the familiar street and, counting the garden gates, reached my own. I walked up the path, and for a moment lingered in the porch to see if there was a letter in the box. As I did so I heard the tap of a stick and a halting step pass my gate. Sergeant Gifford had followed me. Either he had mistaken his way, or he wished to see me safely home. I ran back to the gate to speak to him, but the fog had swallowed him up.

It lasted five days, and I was absorbed in the work of my office. It was some weeks before I visited that part of the town again. It chanced that I had an appointment near the cemetery, and I decided to walk back through Cockburn Street. Already workmen were busy pulling down this eyesore of a slum. There was nothing in Cockburn Street to justify its existence: the long rows of houses were the most hideous industrialism could produce.

I stopped opposite a dark doorway. It was evidently a through passage, for a policeman turned down it before me, carrying a parcel. I noted the name: Cripps Passage. I decided it would save me some minutes, and followed.

As I entered it a familiar smell of age, dirt, and decay exuded from the walls. In spite of the sunshine a sensation of fear shook me. I persevered, and came out in a little court, a single lamp-post in the centre. A police sergeant stood by the lamp, looking reflectively at the house opposite. He was stolid, kindly, and reassuring. I looked from him round the court, and knew it ; it was the hideous courtyard of the fog.

‘ Good morning, sergeant,’ I said. ‘ I suppose this will be coming down next ? ’

‘ Well, I suppose so,’ he said.

‘ A good thing too. Nothing interesting or worth keeping.’

‘ Well, I wouldn’t say that, miss,’ he said slowly. ‘ It’s of interest to the Force, you know. Come to think of it, that’s partly why I turned in to have a look at it.’

‘ You don’t say so. Why ? ’

‘ This house was Hawkscroft’s house, the Cripps Yard murderer.’

Chill seized me. ‘ How long ago ? ’

‘ Oh, long before you were born, miss. Before I was, for that matter. No one’s lived in the house for years.’

‘ He was a Yorkshireman ? ’ I said unsteadily.

‘ He was. You know all about it, I see. Quite a lot of ladies read up these things nowadays, though I don’t hold with it myself. He was a cheerful, jovial sort, from all accounts. No one suspected him, did they ? ’

‘ I don’t know. Please go on.’

‘ Why, he started off by body-snatching. The cemetery, you see, miss, was near by and convenient. Then it got to murder. A fog gave him his first chance. But he was caught all right in the end.’

I was holding the lamp-post a little unsteadily.

‘Sergeant,’ I said, ‘did you ever hear of a man called Gifford in these parts? Sergeant Gifford?’

‘Why, yes, there was a sergeant of that name went over with us at the end of ’14. Lost an arm and leg at Ypres. I heard he died of wounds, but there, I couldn’t say. Wonderful what these surgeons can do. It’s odd your asking me about him, for he was a native of this town, and I’m not. He’d often talk about it out there. A rare good sort. Little I thought then I’d end up here. But if he did return it’s odd I haven’t come across him. British Legion, and all. You’re looking a bit all in, miss, if I may say so. I oughtn’t to go on talking this way to you; but it’s my job, this sort of thing, and interests me. I came back for something, too.’

He opened a shattered door, and stepped into an empty house. All the inhabitants of the court had been moved out to some new housing scheme. He came out, holding a sack. Something in the sack moved.

‘It’s a poor cat they left behind,’ said the sergeant. ‘I’m taking him down to the Shelter to have him put to sleep.’

‘Tell them to keep him for a few days, sergeant. If he’s anything like, I’ll find him a home. Here’s my card.’

‘Very kind of you, miss, I’m sure.’

‘Can you tell me where I can get a good cup of coffee?’

‘I know just how you feel,’ said the sergeant, ‘and there’s a lot of this influenza about. There’s a good café across the street, to the left, miss.’

We stepped out of the entry into the sunshine, and he saluted and walked off.

A week later I visited the Shelter. The cat was *the* cat. He had already improved enormously, and was busy making a thorough toilet. He had earned a eulogy from the attendant for good behaviour and general propriety.

I gave him a home, and have never regretted it. He has

proved a faithful companion and a dignified friend. Moreover, we have a bond in common : we have both seen Hawkscroft, the Cripps Court murderer, and Sergeant Gifford.

The question arises, Was Sergeant Gifford also a ghost ? I have advertised, and have had no answer. Were both ghosts, or were both men ? Did the jovial Yorkshireman merely resemble Hawkscroft ? I think not. Only my cat can answer. He maintains a dignified reserve.

I have questioned the errand-boy. He assures me that I was quite alone when he ran into me. He heard only my steps in the avenue. Except for me there was nothing but fog.

‘A wicked fog,’ he says.



## *THE OLD HALL.*

BY JULIAN TENNYSON.

ROMANCE and strange legend are to be found on every page of Suffolk's history ; in fact, I dare swear that no other county has so much latent treasure as we. We have no British Village, no Maiden Castle, no Glastonbury, no Cathedral even—for the most part our show-pieces are in ruins. We prefer them that way. We resent the archæologist and the excavator, and there is something about us—the wild, untidy face of the land, perhaps, inhospitable to the stranger—that keeps at bay the hound with a hunger for knowledge, for we are jealous of our antiquity. Unexplored we are, and so we shall remain ; yet what a feast of secrets is spread before those who know us well !

Within a few miles of my home are a village under the sea (the fishermen say that the church bell still tolls a muffled watery Requiem for its own little community), a Saxon chapel in the marshes, two ruined abbeys, a druidical forest, and farther inland a castle, a moated fifteenth-century farm and two of the finest parish churches in the land. Beyond the borders of the county little is known of any of them ; while Bruisyard Old Hall has gained no fame whatsoever, which is why it is the subject of this article.

The very name Bruisyard has a ring of distinction. It is a village tucked in a hollow in the flat, desolate land, a handful of cottages straggling in disorderly line up from that vague stream, which is called the river to the church, round-towered and tiny on the crest of the gradual rise. No prettiness, no uniformity, but an inward beauty distilled by the years.

The Old Hall itself lies near the church, at the end of a flat meadow just beyond the cross-roads, and the long fields of corn sloping steeply behind it make a perfect background for the square gables, the pale Tudor brick and the elegant chimneys. It has a welcoming air of warmth and gentleness which astonishes you in that wild country ; you lean over the plain white gate and look at it down the long gravel drive, and the Old Hall stares back at you, solid and rambling, from the ring of oaks and elms that screen it on three sides. A magnificent house, you think ; the Lord of the Manor lives in it, of course. But you are wrong ; a farmer lives there, and he fights an uphill battle with the soggy, obstinate land. It was the same with the last one and it will be the same with the next. The Old Hall has never been a successful farm, as if it considered farming an insult to its dignity, and resented the snoring labourers in those fine spacious rooms which may once have been convent cells and are now used as dormitories.

The history of the Old Hall opens in 1354. In that year Maud de Lancaster, Countess of Ulster, removed her college of priests from the near-by village of Campsey Ash, where she had founded it eight years before, to an abbey which she built on the site of the Old Hall of to-day. One reason given for the change of scene was that the distance to the church in Campsey made too long a daily walk for the portly chaplains ; another, much more romantic, that they would be better off '*ubi non est conversatio mulierum*,' as the distractions of Campsey included a convent.

Installed in their new dwelling, the priests said a daily Mass for the souls of Maud's former husbands, William de Burgh and Ralph de Ufford. The college was rich in land ; it had seven messuages, one mill, 60 acres of meadow, 10 of pasture and 20 of wood ; the priests were given a

common Refectory, Dormitory and Chapel, besides a chest for their funds and plate. Apparently they were still considered capable of misdeeds, for the three keys to the chest, differently made, were kept by the Principal and two trusted members of the college.

Ten years later the priests cut loose once more. It seems impossible that in such a deserted spot as Bruisyard the influence of 'mulierum' could again have been the cause, but 'owing to certain complaints' Maud turned them out and made over the college to an abbess and sisters of St. Clare. This was done at the instance of the great Lionel, Duke of Clarence (the third son of Edward III, who had married Maud's daughter, Elizabeth), and with the King's consent; and Maud herself, who up to this time and since the death of her second husband had been a nun in the order of St. Austin (Augustine), now entered by special permission the Order of St. Clare.

The nuns or 'nuns minoresses' of St. Clare had only three convents in the whole of England, the principal one standing in the City of London where the 'Minories' are to-day.

In Bruisyard the nuns maintained a high standard of morality and flourished for the best part of two centuries. They were so well behaved that in 1366 they were allowed to take in one Sir Nicholas Gernoun, a harmless and infirm old knight with property in distant Drogheda, who eked out his old age under their care; in 1386 they appropriated the church, the manor and the advowson; and their estates grew until they absorbed lands beyond the confines of their own parish.

So they continued in ease and opulence until the minions of Henry descended to shatter their tranquillity; on that dark day the terrified nuns shrank back into their cells as

the abbess, keys jingling menacingly, followed the rough Suffolk Commissioners into every hole and corner when they came to make their inventory. The objects that the men picked out included a table of alabaster, two great candlesticks of latten, 'a payor of littel orgaynes very olde,' and an assortment of church plate. They valued the collection at £40 13s. 4d.

The abbess made a last bid for freedom ; she drained the coffers of the convent with a payment of £60 as the price of continuance, and the nuns walked fearlessly once more. But not for long. In 1539 the King's henchmen paid another call, and now there was nothing with which to hold them off ; the abbess and her nuns were bundled out unceremoniously into the wild country, and Henry presented their cherished abbey to Nicholas Hare, a member of the famous East Anglian family and one of the commission appointed to collect all the church plate remaining in the land, 'because the King hath need presently of a masse of monney.' Paying a rent of £6 4s. 1d. per annum, his family owned the place until 1611, when it passed to the family of the Earl of Stradbroke, in whose possession it still remains.

Nicholas it was who pulled down the abbey and erected in its place the Old Hall as it stands to-day ; some of the convent stone he used to good purpose by building a small chantry chapel (now a vestry) in the little church, and three fine brasses there commemorate him and his family. Certainly he did his work well when he set his hand to the Old Hall : after four centuries not a brick is displaced, not a chimney fallen. The Hall is as massive and imposing as ever.

Pick your way round the house, through the garden and the farmyard, and you will see many traces of Maud's original convent—two stone arches, blocked up, in the north wall,

which may have been doorways to the chapel ; patches of stone and solid buttresses in the brick walls ; the moat on three sides of the house, and inside it, round the edge of the orchard, the foundations of the convent wall, which must have been at least three feet thick.

Somewhere in the orchard or the yard, trampled and mired by the farmer's cattle, must be the nuns' graveyard, where it is believed that Elizabeth, first wife of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and daughter-in-law of Edward III, lies buried. Beyond the orchard is the fishpond, now much grown over with weeds, but liable in a wet winter to overflow and forcibly remind the farmer of its former status.

The rooms of the Hall (one of them is a priest's chamber containing a carved stone fireplace) are wide and high, with enormous oak beams. Maybe they are the nuns' cells, but this cannot be verified without excavating the walls. The corridors are long and finely timbered, and marks of the adze are to be seen on the floors and balusters ; many of the timbers themselves are tapered and bevelled. All over the house are chambers under the floors, hiding-places capable of holding a dozen men. Put your nose into one of these and the stench of rats will send you back in a hurry.

Clearly seen from the road is the magnificent three-storied porch, topped by a crow-stepped gable ; inside it the third storey is entirely filled by a huge clock, which has no face, the hours and minutes being marked on the wheels. By devious processes the mechanism causes a bell on the roof to strike the hour, and the sundial by which the clock was set is still fixed high up on the porch.

There are two spreading dark patches on the floor of the room behind the clock-tower ; blood-stains, says the tap-room of the ' Frog and Tadpole,' the relics of a fierce and fatal duel of long ago. The clock itself ticks loudly and

eerily, and the villagers like it not when nights are dark and blustering ; some hear in its creaking the clank of chains, others the slow heart-beats of the dying duellist, and they have woven around the Old Hall fantastic tales which will be handed down in Bruisyard for centuries to come.

### CLOISTER REVERIE.

*The men who wrought this fluted span,  
Who set these panes ablaze with fire,  
Who ranged each noble plinth to plan  
And Hope transfigured in a spire—  
Oh ! were they men as men are now,  
Instinct with every fierce desire,  
And herein did they sometimes bow  
To private gods of greed and ire ?*

*Or, haply—with the last shell spent,  
The last incendiary bomb—might we  
For other ages' wonderment  
Bequeath as fair a legacy,  
Like these proud arches to outstay  
The piteous errors of a day ?*

MARGUERITE JOHANSEN.

*'THOU WORM, JACOB.'*

BY ROBERT VERRIER.

I WAS planning a walking tour and I went to my father for advice. He knew the odd corners of New Zealand better than any of the younger generation that keeps to motor-cars and the main roads.

'That's where you want to go,' he said, putting his finger on a part of my map where the surveyor had obviously drawn upon his imagination. 'It's some of the roughest country in New Zealand, just a jumble of hills, as if they'd been emptied out of a sack. That'll test your legs, if that's what you want.'

'It's worth exploring?'

'Yes,' he said. 'It's beautiful, and the longer I live, Jack, the more I see that's the only worthwhile reason for visiting a place.'

'It's a good reason,' I admitted. 'Are there any tracks there? Any settlers?'

'One track and one settler when I was there. It's not likely there'll be any more now. It wouldn't be worth anyone's while to burn the bush off those hills. Have you got a pencil? Look, there's a little stream runs into this bay. The coastline is accurate enough. The Arowhana, its name is. It's only about three miles long, but the prettiest, most fertile valley in New Zealand; flat as your hand from the banks of the stream to the hills. It must have been an arm of the sea at one time, and even now it's only a great bank of sand and shingle that keeps the sea back. The Arowhana forms a little lake that filters away

through the bank. There's a drover's track in over the hills from Monkstown, runs something like this. Jacob Brock and I cut it through the bush.' He stopped and looked at me as though in doubt, then he went on. 'Yes, I'll tell you a bit about my past you've never heard before. Jacob and I farmed the Arowhana together until we quarrelled. That must be forty years ago. I cleared out, I remember, after a terrible row, the night of the storm. It was on my conscience for years. I had the money I owed him in my pocket, but I was glad to get away. I was no farmer . . .' He stopped suddenly and I turned to the map. My father's youth was his own concern.

'Shall I go and see him?' I asked.

'Yes, do. See what he's made of the valley. He was a born farmer. I only wish I could come with you. After all, I didn't cheat him. He got the land.'

The next day, as I was setting off with my pack on my back, my father said to me, 'Better not say you're my son, Jack. He hated me, I think.'

'But that was forty years ago.'

'Oh, forty years is nothing in Arowhana valley. So little happens. Here, it's different. I had forgotten all about it till I saw your map yesterday. By the way, he's a very religious man, pre-Darwin. Good-bye and pleasant journey.'

I found the valley but, whatever it had been in my father's time, it was no longer beautiful. The Arowhana gushed strongly from the base of a limestone cliff, but it flowed for barely a mile through a wilderness of manuka bushes and gorse into a desolate sea-marsh choked with rushes. Dead grey trees still stood here and there. Half-way down the valley was a rotting wooden house in the middle of a choked garden.



I hurried on towards the sea, hating this desolation where I had expected to find beauty, and then, on rounding a bluff, I found a garden. I stared, not at its loveliness, for it was only a well-kept vegetable garden, but at a clipped bank of turf behind it. There, traced out in whitewashed stones against the emerald green, were the words in huge capitals, 'THOU WORM, JACOB.'

I laughed and was immediately ashamed before such an open advertisement of stark spiritual conflict. The stones had been there for years. The fat spongy turf curved over and held them as neatly as a gold setting holds a diamond. In the light of the sun, whose evening beams had gathered a glare from the sea, they shone with something of the white glitter of the diamond. They were bold and merciless, and yet were beautiful. 'THOU WORM, JACOB.' The memento had the brutal directness of an earlier age. It was the voice of a prophet putting man in his place in the scale of the universe.

'Jacob is alive then,' I said to myself. 'I must find this worm Jacob.'

Jacob was round the next bend of the valley. He was sitting peeling potatoes on the grass in front of his cottage, which was perched up on a green shelf facing seaward. Near by an iron pot simmered on a rough stone fireplace.

'Good evening,' I said.

'Evening, brother,' he greeted me, humbly enough, though his hard blue eyes gave me an arrogant stare.

I slung off my pack and stretched myself on the turf beside him. He did not look round at me, and I could see his face in profile, a low straight, frowning brow beneath a thick grey thatch, fleshy bulbous nose, coarse beard standing out from his chest so far that I could clearly see the hillside beyond as through a tunnel.

'Jacob is not crushed yet,' I thought, and I said aloud, 'You have a beautiful view of the coast from here.'

'Ay. It's the Almighty's.' Then he challenged me with the question: 'Do you know anything of the Almighty's that is not beautiful?'

I was taken aback. It was a long time since, out in the world, I had heard such a question so confidently proposed.

I nodded towards the valley. 'That valley,' I said maliciously. 'It stinks.' He turned his face to me for the first time. 'A beard is not fair,' I thought. 'He is in ambush. It's as bad as dark spectacles,' for his eyes told me nothing. They might have been blue beads.

To my surprise he made no attempt to defend the Almighty. 'What might your name be?' he asked.

'Purdy,' I replied. 'John Purdy.' Remembering my father's advice, I gave him my mother's surname.

'H'm,' he said after a long pause. 'You're mighty like someone I used to know.' My mind was idling after a seagull in flight. 'He's dead.'

I sat up. 'Dead? Who is dead?'

'The man you remind me of. Tim Carden, his name was. Dead these forty years.' He dug his knife into the turf at his side. 'I'll put a case to you. Suppose a man had done a great wrong to another man, had even taken his land, and the Almighty had punished him for it. Is it right that the man he's done the wrong to should haunt him all the days of his life?'

'But . . .' I began.

'I did not kill him.'

'But . . .' I tried again to enlighten him.

'Punishment should quit a man of his sin, I reckon. That's justice.'

'Very well,' I was thinking. 'If he won't let me tell him, he won't. I doubt if he'd believe me anyway.'

'Every night he comes to remind me of what I did.' He leaned towards me. 'And mind you, by man's law I had done no wrong.' Then he burst out passionately, 'There is another law. "Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour's landmark."'

I was afraid of his passion. I stood up.

'Where are you going?' He asked, suddenly quiet.

'I must find a place to camp before dark.'

'You can stay with me if you like.' He drew his knife from the turf and, wiping it on his trouser leg, began to slice the potatoes into the pot. 'There's enough here for two and you can sleep in the house there. It's a stew.'

He stirred it with the knife, raising an appetising steam.

'Thank you. I'll stay,' I said, sitting down again. 'Perhaps Carden will keep away if I do.'

'Perhaps,' he repeated, glancing sideways at me. Suddenly he faced me. 'There's no "perhaps" about it, Tim Carden.' He gripped my wrist. 'You shan't go this time before you've heard my side. For forty years you've haunted me and never would you listen to me, but now I've got you I will not let you go until you have heard me.'

'You fool,' I cried. 'I am no ghost. You are gripping my wrist. It is flesh and blood.'

'Jacob wrestled with an angel. I will not let you go.'

He was mad. His brooding hermit life had made him mad. I tried to trick him back to sanity. 'The stew is burning,' I said.

'Let it burn. Why did you try to cheat me, Tim? I knew you at once, the minute I set eyes on you. You remember when we found this valley. . . .'

I tugged at my wrist. 'Let go my wrist,' I shouted.

'I remember nothing. I am not Tim Carden. I am his son.'

His grip tightened. His little blue beadlike eyes glittered with anger and his beard around his lips glistened with spittle. I stared at him, too fascinated to be afraid. I watched his speechless passion at my denial blaze and die down fitfully, and with the cunning that succeeded it he found speech.

'So you are Tim Carden's son, eh? John Purdy! Then, of course, you know nothing.' He lumbered to his feet, pulling me up with him. 'I'll show you something.' He paused at the foot of the steps up to the open doorway of the house. 'Of course,' he said with laboured sarcasm, 'you remember nothing of this. You are John Purdy, son of Tim Carden, dead these forty years.'

We passed up the steps. Coming out of a glaring sunlight, I could see only dimly in a shuttered room a few scattered bits of furniture. Then suddenly there leapt out from the wall beyond the words of the garden, 'THOU WORM, JACOB,' and below them, 'Isaiah 41, 14.' The letters had been roughly splashed on with red roof paint. They were drunkenly askew. Capitals were mixed with small letters. Lines of paint had run down the wall, ending in little blobs. The words stood out like fire.

I heard the old man say, 'Wasn't that revenge enough, Tim Carden, without haunting me as you do?'

So this was my father's doing. 'And the stones in the turf?'

'I set them there. I rubbed salt into my wounds.'

'But what does it mean? Remember, I am not Tim Carden.'

I felt his hand, which had loosened, close convulsively on my wrist. 'I forgot,' he said.

We went out into the last sunshine to the edge of the shelf. The sea was of blinding silver and I turned my eyes with relief inland to the dreary shadowed valley. 'See how the Lord punished me the night Tim Carden died,' cried a voice at my side. He was mourning over his lost land. His voice was as desolate as the cry of a curlew over marsh-land.

At the edge of the shelf he pulled me down. 'Of course, you are not Tim Carden,' he said. 'You know nothing. I will tell you. Tim Carden and I found this valley. There was a great barrier of sand and shingle that kept the sea back, and through it the stream soaked away. We worked together for a time, clearing the valley bottom, cutting a track through the bush over the hills to the outside world, ploughing and putting the land down to pasture. Then Tim said to me one day, "Jacob, this life's too lonely for me. I'm going to marry and get children. There's no sense for you either in working like this with no one to carry on when you're dead. It's best we should both of us marry."'

'I saw he was right. "Then we'll divide the valley," I said. "We'll draw lots."'

'Tim won the seaward end which was the better land by far, fattening land with a salt bite. We neither of us had any particular woman in mind, but we knew that, if we had something to offer, we'd soon find them. We set about building. That's Tim's house behind us; mine, or what's left of it, is up the valley a bit. We'd no sooner finished than we quarrelled.' He pressed my wrist. 'I admit I was in the wrong, Tim,' he said.

I turned to him. His blue eyes were darkening to black in the quickly fading light. 'I am not Tim Carden,' I said emphatically.

'No. Well, I was in the wrong, I admit it. It was such a year as had never been known, a warm dry summer that seemed never-ending. It went on into the autumn and early winter, clear mild days and warm nights. One day I said to Tim, "It is the end of the world. It says in the Old Book, 'In those days ye shall not know summer from winter except by the fall of the leaf.''" Tim laughed at me. "That's not from the Book," he said. "I'll show you," I said. "You can't," said Tim. "It's not there. I don't know where it comes from, but you won't find it in the Book."

'You quarrelled about that?' I asked incredulously.

'He should not have laughed at me,' he cried passionately. 'He knew I was a religious man. Even if it wasn't in the Book he shouldn't have laughed. And he did worse than laugh. He set out to prove me a fool.'

'How could he do that?' I asked ironically.

'He wrote to a parson. He had no right to go so far.'

'He could have left you self-satisfied,' I said.

'Yes, and why not? Why should he go out of his way to prove me wrong? He brought the parson's letter to show me. It said, "The words are not from the Bible. They form one of the predictions of Mother Shipton, a Yorkshire prophetess of the fifteenth century."'

It was dark and he was only a shadow at my side, but I could tell from his voice that he was as young as I and living again through his humiliation.

'You did not believe it,' I said.

'No,' he cried, 'and I do not believe it yet. I will find it.'

I heard from his direction a sound that I recognised. He had struck with his open hand a book in his pocket. 'He has a Bible there,' I thought.

'It is there. I will find it yet,' he cried again. 'I will search the Scriptures. I got the words from my father and he said they were from the Book.' But I heard beneath his words that he knew they were not there.

'You hated Tim Carden then,' I said, to bring him back to his story.

'Yes, I hated him. He was no farmer. There was too much of the city in him. He was too quick. I was a farmer by nature. I lived slowly from year to year.'

'He was a hunter,' I said. 'You robbed him of his birthright, Jacob.'

'I took lawfully what was his. He had mortgaged his land and stock, and I bought the mortgage. I went to him one night. "Is it the end of the world, Jacob?" he asked, for the weather had broken suddenly that day and there was a great gale blowing. "It is the end of you here, Tim Carden," I said. "You owe me two hundred pounds and I want the money." I showed him the papers. "You haven't paid the interest, and you can't pay. The land isn't yours, the stock isn't yours. This house isn't yours. You can pack up and go."'

'He saw that I was in earnest and he could not say a word, his mind was so divided against itself. Then he did a thing so cruel that I reckon we were quits. There was a pot of red paint in a corner of the room. He took it up and, on the wall, he splashed up the words, "THOU WORM, JACOB. Isaiah." Then he turned to me. "There's a bit of true Scripture for you, Jacob." He was shouting against the storm. "That's not from Mother Shipton." He turned to the wall again and splashed up the figures, "41, 14." "There," he shouted. "No need to search for that. I'm giving you chapter and verse."'

Jacob fell silent. My mind was wandering to the time-

less beauty of the moonlit world when, suddenly, he claimed me again. 'The dyke was down,' he exclaimed.

'The dyke?' I questioned.

'The storm! We did not know. While we were quarrelling there God had taken a hand.'

'God,' I said stupidly, bewildered by the beauty of the night.

'The storm had broken down the dyke. The sea had flooded the valley. It was a just punishment. I had plotted against my friend to steal his land. Tim never knew of the flood.'

'That is true,' I said. 'How was that?'

'He died.'

'Did you kill him?' I wondered how deep his delusion went.

'No,' he said. 'I could have killed him when he put that text on the wall. I did not. I went out into the storm and found my valley flooded. I ran back and he was gone.'

'Gone!' I exclaimed. 'Then you do not know that he is dead.'

'He haunts me, I tell you. How could he do that if he was not dead? He died that night.' He turned to me. 'Tim,' he said, 'leave me alone. I said I would make you hear me. You must see that all the blame was not mine.'

What could I do? It was impossible to convince the old man that I was his friend's son. I was a ghost and I saw that, to give him peace, I must humour him.

'You have never looked up that text?' I asked.

'No,' he said. 'I dared not.'

'You must do so. It reads, I think, "Fear not, thou worm, Jacob, for I will help thee."' He had released my wrist. 'Good-bye, Jacob,' I said. 'This is the last time I shall haunt you,' and I took up my pack and walked away.

*New Zealand.*



## PERSONALITY.

BY C. E. LAWRENCE.

““ My good friend,” quoth I, “ as sure as I am I and you are you.” “ And who are you ? ” said he. “ Don’t puzzle me,” said I.’ That, from *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, puts the truth of human Personality into a dialectical nutshell. Personality ! It is actual. Although in all probability never perfectly known, it is not unknowable ; while it changes for good or bad, in weakness or strength, with personal growth. It is, in truth, as familiar to us as breathing, and as close to ourselves as we are—an absolute intimacy here and now expressed in this pleasing, anxious being ; though apparently it is also as evasive as a flickering sunbeam to those who would grasp its reality.

More than merely human, it is as varied in expression as there are sentient creatures on the Earth ; cats, dogs, horses and, it may be (who knows otherwise ?), that worms possess it ; while many people of imaginative heart have thought that even houses, ships and machines have self-consciousness, an individuality of their own. There was, as Rudyard Kipling knew, a Ship that found herself ; while anyone who has had long use, even of a pedal-bicycle, can feel that sometimes a machine thinks and acts for itself. Probably a tombstone is the only expressive thing that is devoid of personality. It tells—if it tell anything—only of perfections, such as no man dead or living ever has possessed.

I recall the hour when I discovered myself to be Ego, having a will and personality of my own. Of a sudden it came to me. It must have been when I was twelve or

thirteen, and hurrying along a commonplace street in an unimaginative London suburb when, as in a flash, I was aware that I had an identity, particular and peculiar to myself, definite, different and apart from that of any of my fellows in the boarding-school that was then my lot.

The discovery of that self-independence and self-definition gave me a new sense of responsibility and wonder ; though what the true value of that impression could have been it is impossible now to say, but something more than modesty suggests it was not much. Since that ignorant young day I have come (with others) to believe that Personality is the most actual part of a sentient being, and probably the very reality of that soul whose health and saving have been a main preoccupation of conscientious Christians throughout the centuries.

How far it is heritable is uncertain, for every individuality necessarily has numberless facets, mostly immeasurable and, it must be, generally indeterminate ; though some, as with facial resemblance which, of course, is an important detail of any personality, are easily appreciable. But only in a superficial manner can even that be so. For years ago I knew twins, John and William. To the first appearance they were as alike as the proverbial peas, and confusion was caused frequently as to who of them was which. In the words of the old song,

*In face and features, form and limb,  
I grew so like my brother,  
That folk kept taking me for him  
And each one for the other.  
It puzzled all our kith and kin  
It was an awful 'fix—*

the rest of the stanza evades me, except that somehow monstrously the last word rhyming with ' fix ' seems to have

been 'which,' and as our neglected old mentor, Euclid, at the end of certain of his propositions, was apt to say—'which is absurd.'

To revert to our twins. After a while I was able to distinguish the one from the other, but only through the circumstance that William had a mole underneath, while John had one like it to the right of, the dexter eye. When months had passed, however, and the brothers were familiarly known, their facial similarities seemed to have gone, as their dispositions were so unlike. John was selfish and assertive ; William generous and, without weakness, glad to yield to the convenience of others, and their expressions told the truth of them ; so that one came to wonder how their identities had ever been confused.

Personality, of course, in some respects is heritable ; and also is affected by the environment from birth onward and indirectly even before birth. When the crusted son of a long uninterrupted line of lawyers produces a descendant to carry on the family profession and its traditions, almost as sure as eggs are believed to be eggs that son will become the spit of his sire. Heredity and environment and the daily practice, in his case, combine to preserve those similarities in appearance and texture of thought that preserve the family likeness, habits of mind and prejudices. Such an example, however, is exceptional, though among the old families that for generations have carried on, as counsel or solicitors, the conservative profession of the Law it must be more frequent than elsewhere ; while in dynasties that through close inter-marriage have kept their blood even unwisely constant, characteristics are apt so to develop that in time we come to recognise a Bourbon lip or Habsburg chin in descendants far down the line from him or her with whom those exaggerations began. Such features, however, are only a minor

part of a personality, and as was seen in the case of our John and William, even a very close facial resemblance, to the first sight, may dissolve before familiar acquaintance and the influence of a positive inward spirit.

The force or appeal of a personality must depend on its whole with special characteristics dominating ; but any such completeness is bound to be so complex, with its fluctuating wilfulness, affectations, and emotions, that it is impossible ever to be certain over it. One may leap, grasp and hold what on contemplation seems to have been only the apparent contradiction of a shadow. Yet out of it does come some expression of the reality within us, and of us, that is us ; of the existence of which there appears to be no doubt in spite of some associated uncertainties.

This truth may best be seen in the creatures of imaginative literature. How clear to us the best of them are with their faults, humours, passions and strengths—Don Quixote, Mr. Pickwick, Sir Roger de Coverley, Mistress Quickly, Robinson Crusoe, Falstaff, Toby Shandy, Beatrice, the Vicar of Wakefield—every one of them through the genius of their creators being more actual to the thought and mental vision than persons we have known in familiar flesh, as, let us say, the man in the flat next door or even our own shy maiden-aunt.

And all things differ from all things else. The easy saying that there are not two persons, or even two peas, alike in the world, is a truth ; and not because of the quibble—the only touch of humour in the cocksure science of Logic—that they have a difference because of their dissimilar surroundings.

Take the minutest blob of animal matter, as it seems : a certain kind of marine shell, so small that to the naked eye it is a speck. Examine it through a microscope and the

simplicity may be resolved into complexity, and under the magnification designs, symmetrical, elaborate and beautiful, be revealed, to make the observer wonder why such miracle was hidden in minuteness. So also, with personality. The reality of every man, woman and child, nay, of every living creature, is comprised of simplicities, commingled, that turn out after consideration to be complexities as mysterious and mystical as that of the shell. Yet out of the fullness of those infinite details, actions and reactions, something is to be discovered or made ; and so we come to judging our fellows, estimating their characters for what they seem worth, and—doubtless with more sympathy, though it may be with even less knowledge—to judging ourselves.

It is easy from the slant of the nose, the light of the eyes, the firmness of a jaw, the delicate indifference of a chin, to generalise over individuals who are only casually known. But there is other evidence also, though it is less secure.

*I do not like you, Dr. Fell !  
The reason why I cannot tell—  
But I do not like you, Dr. Fell !—*

representing an instinct the opposite, let us say, to that of falling in love at first sight.

For more than outward aspects are required. Charm also has its part in a personality, and is too elusive to be photographed. Indeed, the camera with its bare truthfulness cannot tell all the truth. It may do justice to regularity of features, reproducing the externals faithfully ; but it can hardly catch the expression, the delicacy, the shine and shadow of thought in a face, and reveals, therefore, less than half the story, of which the better half was illustrated by Matthew Royden in a stanza of tribute to Sir Philip Sidney's personal charm :

*A sweet attractive kind of grace,  
A full assurance given by looks.  
Continual comfort in a face,  
The lineaments of Gospel books ;  
I trow that countenance cannot lie  
Whose thoughts are legible to the eye.*

There is a theory of the human aura, a spiritual envelope to every corpus, that expresses the moral quality of the humanity it encloses, and it may be through some such ethereal agency and super-delicate contact that we come to 'sense,' as it were, and to like or dislike Dr. Fell, his wife and the little Fells. That, however, is only to the point so far as the aura—if there be such a condition—does represent a personality, as well may be ; for with second-sight, hypnotism, and water divination, to which some or many of us are insensitive, there must be billions on billions of things in existence of which we are not aware, and that probably will have remained hidden from human intelligence when this warm Earth has fallen, to be merely a husk with its energies and madness spent.

Similarly, in this search for the realities of Personality we may recognise that in ourselves there is more than ourselves, or rather that every self is the ultimate and complicated expression of innumerable other selves. Lafcadio Hearn has put this truth so well that I will quote him. 'For what is our individuality?' he asks. 'Most certainly it is not individuality at all ; it is multiplicity incalculable. What is the human body? A form built up out of billions of living entities, an impermanent agglomeration of individuals called cells. And the human soul? A composite of quintillions of souls. We are, each and all, infinite compounds of fragments of anterior lives.'

Rider Haggard also put something of that thought in

another way. 'I am strongly inclined to believe that the Personality which animates each of us is immeasurably ancient, having been forged in many fires, and that, as its past is immeasurable, so will its future be'; while Æ, the Irish poet who is second to none of the verse-builders of Eire, added his authority to that idea when he declared that 'All thoughts are throngs of living souls.'

Maeterlinck illustrated that circumstance or probability—picturesquely rather than convincingly—in his play, 'The Betrothal,' when Tytyl of 'The Blue Bird,' conveyed to the Abode of the Ancestors, meets his forbears in a temporary renewal of life. They were a diverse lot: a citizen, a prisoner in chains, a rich man, four or five beggars, a diseased man, a drunkard, a savage brandishing a blood-stained knife, one or two Gallo-Romans, men of the Stone Age, and a tall peasant who was the 'great ancestor.' From him the enduring vitality, physical, mental and spiritual, of the Family or Clan had come.

And not only those contributors to Personality, Maeterlinck tells us, but 'Everything that you see—this square, that prison, the church, those houses'—wherein the ancestors severally had dwelt—'we who live in them—all this is really only inside yourself. . . . People rarely see it, they don't even suspect it, but it's true.' No wonder then, if such a generalisation can be taken as even imaginatively true, that personalities are dual, and more than dual, and that we are contradictory creatures, especially within ourselves; for who is to know at any critical moment, when a moral decision must be made, whether the savage or the saint in us will be in the ascendant?

Though never surely can those opposite extremes be so clear-cut in their difference as that image suggests. For one person to be at times distinctively Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde

—all good and white, or all evil and black—is to be over-absolute. Rather would they be blended together and so the one from the other inextricable, as Cerberus was to Mrs. Malaprop—‘three gentlemen at once.’

Yet the manifold influences, sympathies and contradictions, buried within each of us, the capacities for greatness and meanness, the vices, vanities, greeds, whims, hopes and powers for moral sacrifice derived from countless ancestors and latent within every one of us, are bound to affect our characters and outward aspects ; while the coherence of a personality must be the more complete through those many contributory diversities. This truth, also, is clear that far more than the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children.

Personality implies style, an individual style, through which the general characteristics of a person and that which gives the salt and savour to his work may be discerned. ‘*Le style, c’est l’homme même !*’ This over-quoted truth is best illustrated from the creations of genius, which being the results of exceptional gifts are apt to be exceptionally distinguishable. To take a frank and easy example. For years a notorious discussion raged over the alleged authorship by Francis Bacon of the Shakespearean plays. Absurd as it was, it roused storms of small excitement in many places, divided families, made battle-grounds of drawing-rooms, caused eccentrics to grow prophetic and inventiveness to riot—alas ! sometimes beyond the limits of mental security ; while history was ransacked for clues, and cryptograms, impossible always to the orthodox and over the rightness of which no two Baconians ever could agree, were elaborated in super-ponderous volumes. It was a form of midsummer madness that went noisily on through many midwinters also ; yet the application of a simple test might have resolved it promptly.



It is to examine the particular styles, the personalities, of the two men, as revealed in their writings ; to read the prose of Bacon and afterwards that of Shakespeare, to examine the verse of my Lord St. Albans and then the poetry of ' the Stratfordian ' ; and the only sensible result of the process is to endorse the conclusion of James Spedding, Bacon's biographer, who knew his mind and writings better than any one else, that whoever wrote those plays it was not Francis Bacon. The evidence and contrast of their styles reveal Shakespeare as abundantly imaginative and humorous, though possibly in his prose at times a little too compact and complicate because of the eager flow and rush of his manifold ideas, but when emotion was called-for he was exalted, as also he could be in vision and thought. But while his temperament was keenly sensitive to impressions the great Lord Chancellor, finished and graceful writer though he was, as well as brilliant lawyer and pioneer of modern science, regarded ' exactness ' as the most desired quality in the wording of thought, and took care to be free from emotional or highly imaginative flights.

It is a curious coincidence that shortly after writing that I came to a passage in Dr. G. B. Harrison's *Last Elizabethan Journal* which shows that Bacon himself tested authorship by the style. Queen Elizabeth had questioned certain writings that smelt to her treasonable, and was minded to put their author to the rack. Bacon, however, pleaded against such a method of seeking the truth. ' Let him have pen, ink and paper and help of books,' he said, ' and be conjoined to continue the story where it breaketh off, and I will undertake by collating the styles to judge whether he were the author or not.'

In the Drama or, more accurately, alas ! the commercialised, shrunken Theatre of to-day, a personality, as it

is there called, but rather its outer appearance, is apt sometimes to be forced at the expense of art, more being asked from it than should be given. Many a good actor who could play anything, even the leg of a table, as the phrase goes, and show a versatility equal to the demands of a Romeo or a Tony Lumpkin, or of most other parts calling for discernment and distinction of identity, is expected on the stage to be merely himself. Not Hamlet but Mr. Blank's Hamlet is the thing; and under such conditions a personality tends to grow stereotyped, so that ere long it must cease to be a personality.

The opposite tendency was seen in the Army, at least in the old days when our wars generally were 'muddled through' and the common soldier was taken to be mere 'human material,' food for powder, cannon-fodder, an automaton—his not to reason why, his but to do and die—with the consequence that those in command of him also grew to a dull pattern, and no one was permitted to think for himself. It was stupid and costly, for it tended to strew the battlefields of the modern world with the victims of martial thick-headedness. And the fault was visible elsewhere than in the Army. Often in that tired Victorian day one heard some hopeful youth in almost any of life's activities being rebuked for showing a promising independence of spirit. 'It's not for you to think,' brayed Long-ears, in his superiority of seniority, 'I'll do the thinking!' As, of course, he did, or didn't, and more often than not with disastrous results. Also, it is not quite possible to believe that such goosery or ganderness is unlikely to recur, for it is a result of square pegs being put into round holes, and while there is favouritism in the world that folly will continue and its results be as they will be.

Further, aspects of a personality seem to be catching. One  
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sometimes meets husbands and wives whose resemblance to each other has become striking, although before their harmonious united life brought them to similarities of manner, thought, expression and speech, they had been not at all alike. Frequently also a man's personality is reflected in the dogs he keeps. Bill Sikes's famous cur was very like his master, as surely also was the hound of Gelert; and that is why some dogs are cads—most of them being born snobs—while those that are well-bred and are set a good example to by their masters, are gentlemen.

As for that superior person, the cat, her characteristics—one instinctively applies the feminine pronoun to any odd representative of the nine-times deathless tribe—are too sensitively reserved to make her the reflex of any mere woman or man. She keeps to herself. Let us, however, not be enticed into discussing her, as there might be no end to it; for she can be as alluring as Cleopatra, and when you think you know her, shows herself as infinite and baffling in her charmed variety as was that royal and ruinous Egyptian hussy. Sufficient to these pages is the example of *homo sapiens*—but how blatantly there the adjective flatters! Say the word in the presence of your favourite cat, philosophically observant in your own arm-chair, of which she knows she has deprived you, and notice how pointedly she expresses the indifference that is the mother of contempt!

Before completing this brief investigation into some of the truths of Personality it may be well again to emphasise the uncertainties abounding. Take the instance of Socrates. From all accounts and such busts and posthumous portraits as there are, his appearance was boorish, ungainly, ugly, almost repulsive; yet that vulgar countenance and coarse exterior enclosed a personality of such greatness and sweetness (as all but the few unorthodox believe) that in wise

humanity he outsoared not only other philosophers but most of mankind.

We find ourselves at the other extreme with Judge Jeffreys, whose name through his record of cruelty has become a byword of infamy. Yet his portrait by an unknown painter in the British National Portrait Gallery gives him a presence so cultured and gentle that the late H. B. Irving was induced by it to study his career afresh in order to disprove the evil reputation that his appearance denied. The investigation, which I understand was not too thorough, did not deprive Jeffreys of his bad eminence ; but the circumstance goes to show that in the study of a subject as evasive as this it is folly ever to be over-confident.

Every one probably can illustrate the ease with which personal values change for a time under certain contacts ; some individuals being weak, with others through intensity able to dominate. I remember on one occasion my strength and personality, as it seemed, being sapped from me through the assertiveness of a visitor, with whom I had to talk, As, with his black eyes fixed on mine, he poured out his insistent demands on my favours or services, I felt that I was losing the freshness and freedom of body and brain. They were being drawn from me and absorbed by him, so that soon I was exhausted and had summarily to end the interview. I feel sure that his sapping of my strength was wilful, vampirical. But that is to touch on questions that only distantly come within the regions of this enquiry. It belongs to mystery and magic, to darkness and wizardry, and, it may be, is Satanic.

It is enough here to glance at the amusing tendency some people have of modifying unconsciously their speech and ways under the direct influence of another. Shyness, want of self-reliance and the wish to please sometimes have devas-

tating effects ; and the mildest of men may then appear hangdog or blatant. The process of listening to one speaking with an affected voice is apt to make the auditor similarly affected ; just as, when in Paris years ago, I found myself in the uncertainties of my French talking broken English after the fashion of my foreign companion. Trifles—but they illustrate ways in which a personality may appear for a time different from itself. But the effect, of course, is only brief. However easily subject a man may be to the influence of another, he yet is bound also to be steadfast to the reality within himself. The effects of inherited generations are not to be dispelled because his Grace was most gracious and under the spell of his charm Mr. X. found himself agreeing to otherwise unacceptable sentiments, and even toadying to the Duke—as franker spirits might declare. For later, when restored to his ordinary circumstances, the weakest man gets back to his own bedrock, which happens to be the fortitude inherited from and comprised of the strengths of the wild men and women, heroes and pleasant citizens of all sorts of goodness, badness, sanity and madness, who were his forebears. Family and race will out and Personality is its ultimate expression.

Occasionally such unity in likeness seems excessive and it takes some time, as a rule, for Europeans to distinguish one Chinaman from another, or even from a Japanese. Yet how annoyed those Orientals might be—without showing it, for they wear invisible though impenetrable veils—over such confusion ; as, of course, their separate individualities are as marked by nature as any others. I remember Dr. Joseph Parker of the City Temple in a sermon pointing out the truth that although a Patagonian herdsman was unable to count more than ten, he could check his full tale of beasts and know if any one was absent, because, alike to each

other as sheep or cattle may seem to us, he recognised every one of them as an individual and knew at once if any 'old friend' was missing.

As to coming to conclusions over our frequently evasive enquiry, this at least is sure. Personality is actual; and for it to be crooked, warped or crushed must denote suffering somewhere in the past. A person who glows and thereby reveals an inward happiness is a witness to health, kindness and sympathy in most of his forebears; and while the child is truly the father to the man, even more so is he the finished expression, physical and spiritual, of his fathers' fathers.

It all seems highly involved, but yet is essentially simple, and so full of byways and tangents, admitting new possibilities and wonders into its infinitude of deathless insubstantialities, that it would easily outdo Tennyson's insistent brook in going on for ever. As, of course, it does go on—for ever and ever and ever and ever; and thereby links the eternal past with—endlessness to come. . . .

## REFLECTIONS ON JAMAICA.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL D. C. SPENCER-SMITH.

MANY people know that Jamaica is an island in the West Indies, that bananas grow there and that in it is a seaside resort called Montego Bay, where the best of sun- and sea-bathing may be enjoyed. Some even know that Kingston is the capital, and that in the past it has suffered badly from earthquakes. But apart from this little is known of the island except that it is generally held to produce the world's best rum. A few notes may therefore be of interest to prospective visitors, many of whom have asked the writer for information.

Jamaica was discovered by Columbus, and in due course added to the overseas possessions of Spain. Originally called Xaymaca—The Land of Springs—it was inhabited by harmless Indians, whose harmlessness, however, did not prevent their rapid extermination in the drastic way characteristic of Spaniards of those days. The whites are there by right—if so it can be called—of conquest; the negroes because the whites brought them there.

Jamaica is a land of high and, in many places, very steep mountains divided by narrow valleys, through which in the rainy seasons dangerous torrents often pour. A few areas of comparatively flat land exist, mainly on the south side, and in the extreme west of the island, but except where there is cultivation the country is covered with thick bush. It is—as a whole—so *accidenté* that no better illustration of it could be given than that said to have been used by

Columbus. When asked by Queen Isabella to describe it, he crumpled up a sheet of paper, and letting this fall on the table said, 'There is Jamaica.'

Little that grows there is indigenous except the bush, one notable exception being Pimento or Allspice, which is peculiar to Jamaica. This spice has great warming properties, and the writer was told that in pre-War days most of the crop was taken by Russia—as also was that of Blue Mountain coffee. In Russia pimento was used in powder form, and sprinkled in the long boots worn there, and it is said to be an excellent specific against chilblains. Owing to a recently-born disease the supply is now much reduced. Russia is, alas ! no longer a buyer—presumably the true Bolshevik is not affected by cold feet—and, when foreign exchange regulations allow, Germany now buys most of the crop for use in flavouring *wurst*. Products such as sugar-cane, bananas, guinea grass, logwood, negroes, ticks and mongoose were all imported.

Even the Jews, who have a strong hold on the island, were deliberately imported—for an interesting reason. Jamaica became British largely by accident, for Admirals Penn and Venables, sent by Cromwell to seize the great island of Hispaniola—now known as Haiti and San Domingo—failed to take this, and fearing to return empty-handed, went on and seized Jamaica instead. They hoped that their failure might thereby be condoned, but Cromwell punished them none the less, though he kept the windfall.

In 1657 the then Governor of the island wrote to Cromwell telling him that shopkeepers were sorely needed, for all English and Scotsmen, who had come out to keep shops, had left them, and gone on to the land, which they found more profitable. Could Cromwell please do something to remedy this state of things ? He did. For the next letter is



from the Lord Protector himself, and tells the Governor that he has spoken with the Chief Rabbi of Brussels, and that the latter hopes shortly to send out a consignment of suitable Jews. A third letter—also from Cromwell—informs the Governor that the Chief Rabbi has failed to get what he wanted in Flanders, but is sending out a shipload of Portuguese Jews, which it is hoped will serve the purpose required. It did, and it still does. So it was that Jewry in Jamaica was born and still lives, as a glance at the names of the principal stores in Kingston will show, where the hold of the Jews is very strong.

Later on came the slave trade, and the importation of negroes from Africa. Much wealth derived from this form of labour until 'Free' in 1837, when the slaves left the plantations and estates, and refused to work for many years. Great numbers of properties were thereby ruined, especially those where slaves had been harshly treated. On others, where treatment had been more humane, there was less trouble, and gradually labour again became available. Even now negroes will often introduce themselves proudly as 'we property people,' meaning by this that their forebears were slaves on that particular property, have always been connected with it, and that in consequence they are 'pedigree stock.'

Much is now written about Jamaica, for the most part representing 'everything in the garden as lovely,' and the writer believes that much harm is done to the island thereby. Visitors go there expecting perfection, and not unnaturally come away disappointed.

One instance—that of roads—may be cited. An article appeared recently in a famous English weekly—written by a well-known West Indian—in which it was stated that there were 2,000 miles of good roads in Jamaica. Probably

few people have driven their own cars more miles over different roads—main and parochial—throughout the island than has the writer, and he has no hesitation in saying that, if Jamaica has 100 miles of good roads, she has more than he has been able to find. They certainly could not be called good in Europe, except perhaps in Albania.

Though well graded and laid out, they are not properly built nor in any way suited to modern traffic. They are for the most part very narrow and made of loose and soft metal thrown on anyhow without proper foundations, to be rolled in by the traffic itself, and much of this so-called metal is already dust at the outset. This soon settles into two broad ruts divided by a high ridge of loose stones, and flanked on either side by similar ridges. Beyond these latter often lie deep 'water tables,' by means of which all lateral support to the road has been removed. Patches of live rock—'growing 'tones' as the negroes call it—appear at frequent intervals.

Driving in Jamaica is mostly bad, and road manners, with few exceptions, do not exist. It seems to be held that the driver who sounds his horn first has right of way, and the other man must slither over the loose metal into the water table and pray that nothing will hit him before the fog of dust has lifted. Coming round a corner both drivers will almost invariably be on the wrong side.

Certainly in Jamaica motoring would be better described as a game of chance rather than as one of skill, and it is also well to remember that there is no compulsory insurance of cars, that the majority of drivers are men of straw, and that if a crash occurs you will almost certainly have to pay for your own repairs, no matter how blameless you may be, and, in addition, for the other man's as well. For witnesses are not difficult to obtain, and a white man starts at a disadvantage.

Sooner or later the problem of the roads will have to be tackled, and in view of the ever-increasing motor traffic they will have to be built on proper foundations with lateral support, and hard metal will have to be produced and tarred before using. At present most of the money poured daily on to the roads in the form of loose metal and dust is wasted, for it is scattered to the winds by the first few cars that pass. But waste and failure to look ahead are unfortunately all too common in Jamaica. Motoring through the island might so well be a delight, and attract visitors to stay in the country districts, where comfortable and moderately priced hotels are to be found, but owing to pot-holes, loose metal, dust and bad drivers, to tour in a car is now little better than a dangerous nightmare.

Another serious want is that of a telephone service, though assurances have lately been given that work on one of a kind will shortly be begun. Jamaica, like Russia, is to have a 'five years' plan,' and we are promised a skeleton telephone service in five years' time. Let us hope that our Jamaica Stalins will be as good as their word. But a good 'Purge' would do no harm, and it is probable that two companies of 'Signals' could give as much in five months' time. This lack of means for quick communication is serious for both business men and visitors, for the postal service can hardly be called efficient, and it is not possible to telegraph after 4 p.m. To be strictly truthful, two separate telephone systems do exist—both privately owned. One serves the 'corporate area of Kingston' only, and the other is an island system installed for their own private use by the United Fruit Company. Possibly vested interests may have been the bar to progress, as they have so often been in the past.

Recently the writer received in the parish of St. Elizabeth two letters, for which he had been anxiously waiting, one

from Montego Bay and the other from Morant Bay, 40 miles and 150 miles distant respectively. The first had taken five days, and the second four days, to reach him, so that he can hardly be blamed for casting aspersions on the postal service.

There is much that is Gilbertian in the island, as the following story will show :—In the parish of Z. a certain coloured man was anxious to stand for the Parochial Board—the counterpart on a small scale of the County Council in England. For this a ‘character’ is required before nomination, and as he had been previously convicted of a serious offence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, his candidature was not accepted. But in Jamaica it seems to be a case of ‘the higher the fewer.’ The higher the assembly the fewer the qualifications required, and for the Legislative Council (or Island Parliament) no character is necessary.

Our friend therefore stood for this, and being in no way handicapped by his previous record, was duly elected and became the ‘honourable member’ for the parish. As member of the Legislative Council (M.L.C.) for the parish, he became automatically an *ex-officio* member of the Parochial Board, for which his candidature had previously been rejected, and was elected its chairman. Truly a case where the rejected became the corner-stone.

Another election experience may also be told. A friend of the writer, a white man, was standing for a certain parish, his opponent being a negro. The latter’s record was not a good one, and his reputation was no better, for he was generally credited with being an ‘obeah man,’ or witch-doctor.

The white man had been holding an election meeting in the local schoolhouse, and was driving home when he espied the light of a lantern in the bush. Knowing his

rival's ways, he got down and walked quietly up to it, coming up just in time to hear the closing words of the other candidate's address—which were as follows: 'And if any of you dare to vote for Mr. X. his face will twist up and he will walk sideways all de rest of his life.'

'Obeah,' or black magic, has still—alas!—great power in Jamaica, and the writer has on several occasions been told by men, who know the island and the negroes exceptionally well, that in their opinion it is actually increasing. On the occasion described the threat was apparently effective, for the utterer was duly elected.

It is a sad fact that racial prejudice is much exploited at election times, and the lowering of the franchise was not followed by any raising of the quality of the candidates for the Council. Indeed, it is sometimes amusing to visualise a not impossible situation in Jamaica, in which fourteen ex-convicts would be found sitting round the dinner table at King's House as 'honourable members' of the Legislative Council.

Up till recently any man who paid 10s. per annum in rates and taxes was entitled to vote, and, in the opinion of many responsible people, the lowering of the franchise to this level had resulted in much harm to the island. But by a ruling lately given the payment of even 10s. is no longer to be the minimum, a ruling which has puzzled many, who believed that the 10s. minimum was laid down in the Constitution, and could not be altered except by the British Parliament.

It is a topsy-turvy island—even roast chickens are usually served upside down—but it is a beautiful one in spite of public inefficiency and waste. It has many troubles to contend with, and, although it has for some time been spared devastation by hurricanes, heavy losses have been

caused by the ravages of Leaf or Black Spot disease among bananas, and the disease which has ruined all pimento 'walks' above a certain altitude. These have practically been wiped out, and the owners left with no income and with no possible alternative cultivation.

At the same time the logwood market has been almost completely shut down, and this dyewood may now almost be classed as a noxious weed. It has become an expensive pest to cattle 'pens' and no longer an asset to many smallholders. Penkeepers, i.e. cattle farmers, have to choose between letting their pastures revert to bush and so starving their cattle, or spending large sums in keeping down the self-sown logwood, when incomes are no longer available for the purpose.

Properties are deteriorating through no fault of the owners, and times are hard for all, for the peasantry suffer with the larger proprietors, who are less and less able to pay both their taxes and the labour, which is so vitally important if productivity is to be maintained.

The same money cannot pay two bills. Unfortunately it has not been possible to detect any definite Government policy which might lead to improvement. Much borrowed money has certainly been spent, but little of it on work that should be reproductive and bring about a permanent improvement in the lot of the agricultural population. The only hope would seem to lie in the adoption of a long-sighted agricultural policy, which might gradually improve the lot of the small cultivator.

Otherwise trouble may come with the advent of labour agitators, who have begun to appear in the island, and to urge an utterly ignorant people to demand wages which the island industries could not bear. The fable of the goose with the golden eggs is too often disregarded.

Generally there has been a widespread lack of foresight, and when a boom has begun in the past, it has seemed to be assumed that this would last indefinitely and men have acted or failed to act accordingly, as in the case of the sugar planters at the end of the War. When offered £100 per ton of sugar, almost to a man they held for £150, and in due course had to accept £10. Of all the good Jamaica proverbs the best is the one least heeded : ' Greedy choke puppy.'

Jamaica has many charms, and no people can be more courteous and more kindly, and for the many kindnesses shown him the writer of these possibly too frank lines can never be sufficiently grateful. He can only beg to be forgiven. But he believes that the island may best be served by telling what he believes to be the truth. Those who go there expecting perfection will be disappointed, but those who do not expect too much will come back rested and refreshed. *Dolce far niente*, and to all, to whom this, with the added charms of perfect sea-bathing and a lovely climate, makes appeal, the advice may be given, Go to Jamaica.

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All the foregoing was written many weeks before the riots in Jamaica broke out, and the writer seems, alas ! to have been only too true a prophet. But the agitators started sooner than he had expected, and with the inflammable material to hand soon caused a conflagration.

The trouble began with a rush of unemployed and unemployables to the sugar-factory in course of erection in Westmoreland by Messrs. Tate & Lyle, who already had all the labour they could employ. That the strike had been carefully prepared seems beyond doubt, and a reliable correspondent writes that several listeners heard on their

wireless one night Russia's congratulations to the leading agitator on 'his good work in Jamaica,' and adds that this was no mere rumour. Certainly there was evidence of organisation and of funds being available for the transport of roughs from place to place, and there seem to have been some ugly moments.

Some planters with a name for harshness were threatened and molested, but others, who were known as just employers, had no trouble at all. The great majority of the elected members of the Council are reported to have lain low and done nothing to guide or control their people.

While the strikes lasted, strike mania was almost universal and amusing stories are told of it. In one case a small holder sought advice from a magistrate as to whether he should strike or not. When asked his reason he replied that everyone else was 'on strike,' and he thought that he ought perhaps to do likewise.

Market women growing their own produce and selling it at their own prices duly 'struck,' and in one case a number of smallholders met and arranged to 'strike'—presumably against themselves. It was quite a new game.

A large programme of agricultural reform has now been announced and every friend of Jamaica will pray for its success. But unless a comprehensive water scheme is included, it is more than likely to fail in its object. Some roads are to be asphalted at once and the telephone system is to be extended, all of which should add to the convenience of residents and future visitors. It now remains to pay the bill, and how this is to be done is greatly exercising the minds of the more thoughtful members of the population.



## *THE FIDDLE AND THE FIRE-BRIGADE.*

BY RONALD PALIN.

DURING the course of a recent address to members of the British Institute of Philosophy, the lecturer referred to the difficulty she always experienced in stating the precise value of the study of philosophy. It was, she felt, rather like the difficulty one would feel if one were asked what was the advantage to be derived from listening to Beethoven's A minor quartet: everyone knew what the value of that was, but it was a value very hard to put into words. She went on to say that although studying philosophy to-day, when the world was in a pitiable state of unrest and confusion, might be compared to fiddling while Rome was burning, she personally considered that if there was nothing one could do to help there was no harm in fiddling.

At the conclusion of the address, a member of the audience rose and said that these words had caused him great distress. By common consent, he said, the need for help was very great; instead of happily fiddling, ought one not rather to run out and join the fire-brigade?

The criticism was so obvious that the lecturer hastened to explain that she had been misunderstood; she had not intended her somewhat dangerous simile to be taken in too literal a sense. She certainly agreed that at a time like this everyone should do his bit; she wished she did not think so, but she did.

The implications of these last words are curious. If the professor meant by them that she wished that the world were in such a condition that there was no necessity for anyone to give a hand with the buckets to save it from the flames, nobody will gainsay her. But there is another, a

very strange, way in which her remark may be construed ; a way which reflects the thoughts of every poet, artist and philosopher who is a meliorist, in every place where thought is vigorous, progressive and unfettered.

Mr. Olaf Stapledon, in the preface to his cosmic *tour de force*, *Star Maker*, states the problem very clearly. After describing the undeniable existencce of the appalling crisis which faces civilisation he says :

‘ Yet I have a lively sympathy with some of those “ intellectuals ” who declare that they have no useful contribution to make to the struggle, and therefore had better not dabble in it. I am, in fact, one of them. In our defence I should say that, though we are inactive or ineffective as direct supporters of the cause, we do not ignore it. Indeed, it constantly, obsessively, holds our attention. But we are convinced by prolonged trial and error that the most useful service open to us is indirect. For some writers the case is different. Gallantly plunging into the struggle, they use their powers to spread urgent propaganda, or they even take up arms in the cause. If they have suitable ability, and if the particular struggle in which they serve is in fact a part of the great enterprise of defending (or creating) civilisation, they may, of course, do valuable work. . . . But the very urgency of their service may tend to blind them to the importance of maintaining and extending, even in this age of crisis, what may be called metaphorically the “ self-critical self-consciousness of the human species,” or the attempt to see man’s life as a whole in relation to the rest of things.’

As bugle and drum inspire soldiers, so may a well-played fiddle hearten firemen, and the sound of a violin in the hands of a master is one of the most divinely beautiful which the human ear can enjoy. The flames can destroy a man’s body, but absence of beauty can destroy his soul. The tasks of those who minister to our physical needs cannot in any way be compared with the tasks of those who fulfil

the desires of our souls. Each should perform his own duty, the duty for which he is fitted, and be honoured for it.

It is a commonplace to say that we live in an age of specialisation, and those who quote the definition of a specialist as 'one who knows more and more about less and less' are understood to regard the tendency as deplorable. Take a man, they would say, an average man, out of a highly 'civilised' modern city and set him down among completely untutored savages, cut off from the world he knows and from the possibility of ever returning to it. Assuming he could speak their language, he would be able to describe to them all the scientific marvels which he daily used, but would be totally unable actually to bring to them any of the benefits which his membership of a civilised community gave him. Even if every raw material were at hand, he would be of no more practical use than a storyteller spinning tales of miracles from his own imagination.

This argument ignores the manifest impossibility of there *not* being a tendency towards specialisation where living has become such a highly complex affair as it is in the twentieth century. Specialisation is, indeed, eminently desirable, and there are many spheres where there is not half enough of it, and one man is doing two jobs badly which two men would do well. The countryside is being defaced by abominably ugly houses because persons who know how to build them imagine that they also know how to design them. Thousands of disgracefully bad books appear every year because persons who have had interesting experiences (or, worse still, only wish they had) imagine that they also know how to write about them. Cases could be multiplied almost indefinitely where what might be good work is bad work, or only indifferent work, because, for whatever reason, a specialist has not been consulted.

Now a philosopher is not a specialist. He is not a specialist for the reason that he seeks to discover the ultimate reality underlying every conceivable branch of human activity. From this one might be led to suppose that there is no branch of human activity in regard to which philosophers ought not to be consulted, in the same way as one consults a doctor about one's health or a stockbroker about one's investments. It was precisely this misconception which the lecturer sought to remove from the mind of her distressed interrogator.

Modern philosophers have been divided into two kinds : those who are concerned to make some really epoch-making discovery, and those who are concerned to understand clearly what they are talking about. Apart, however, from the question as to which of these two aims is the more laudable, there is fairly general agreement even among philosophers of the first type that in their own day no really significant discovery about the nature of reality is likely to be made. To their credit it must be added that they do not adduce this belief as an excuse for giving up the struggle. But so far from doubting whether philosophers are justified in taking this view, the ordinary man with some idea of what philosophy is 'all about,' while recognising that when the nature of a result is known an important step has been taken towards its achievement, cannot even begin to imagine what the nature of such an epoch-making discovery might be, let alone understand how society could conceivably profit by it. It may, indeed, be argued with some excuse that no philosopher since philosophical thinking began ever has made an epoch-making discovery, if by this one may be allowed to mean a discovery which is at once profoundly significant and demonstrably true. Philosophers have not made discoveries : they have advanced opinions and formulated theories, opinions and theories which have not only

been attacked and refuted by other philosophers but which, even if they had been demonstrably true, would have had no real, practical importance at all. To-day, philosophers deal with conceptions of such difficulty and complexity that they have found themselves under the necessity of introducing a number of entirely new words into the language, and of ascribing to several old words entirely new meanings, in order to discuss their ideas, with the result that they are, with certain notable exceptions, less intelligible than ever. But they still seem to be as far as ever from that 'epoch-making discovery.'

*The Times Literary Supplement*, reviewing Professor Harold Richards' book, *The Universe Surveyed*, refers to his 'description of an imaginary cinema film displaying in a two-hours' run the past history of the earth—a time scale in which the career of the human race would be limited to a fraction of the last second.' Professor Joad puts the same idea equally strikingly<sup>1</sup>: 'If we reckon,' he says, 'the whole past of life upon the earth at a hundred years, the whole past of human life is reduced to one month, and of human civilisation to just over two hours.' And as regards the future, '. . . we reach the result that a time scale which reckons the past of human civilisation at something over two hours gives man a future of about a hundred thousand years.' In other words, man is but a new-born child, and all his theories and speculations but the first faint glimmers of a dawning intelligence.

There is no more fascinating intellectual pastime than this: to consider how different man is from his earliest ancestors, and to reflect how different his ultimate descendants will be from him, when the same number of countless years has passed over the earth again. For progress there has been; even in one's most despairing mood one cannot

<sup>1</sup> *Guide to Philosophy*.

deny it ; and progress there will be. Man may have grasped more scientific power than his lagging spirit and dim intellect can cope with ; he may have an utterly false sense of values and no sense of proportion at all ; he may be ignorant, irrational and brutal ; but he is young, and his mental stature will increase until it has reached heights that it does not dream of. Progress there will be : unless . . .

Unless there is failure to join the fire-brigade.

It is not the world which is in need of reform, but the people in it. The world is a good place ; it abounds in good and beautiful things. But people do not understand how to live in it. Let people be educated in the art of living together in an infinitely diverse harmony, and all will be well. But it is not the business of philosophy to do this ; it is the business of ethics, of sociology, of psychology, of psycho-analysis, of political economy, with none of which, not even ethics, is philosophy properly concerned. So great an authority as Mr. Bertrand Russell has stated that in his opinion ethics ought not to be regarded as a department of philosophy. This is not to say, however, that philosophers cannot render assistance to workers in all these spheres ; they can, and they must. But let them not think that what they are doing is in any way connected with philosophy, which is a greater thing.

The fiddler must put down his fiddle and run to give a hand with the buckets. And when the fire is out he must not stop there ; he must help those whose job it is to see that no such conflagration shall ever break out again. Then in security he must take up his fiddle again and play : play, and produce strains more beautiful than any he has produced before, strains which have a value so great that it cannot be described, and which all who have ears to hear may hear, to the enrichment of their souls.

## PASSCHENDAELE, 1917.

*An Iris by a little pool  
Of quiet waters, crystal cool,  
Set in a tree-clad vale ;  
With aching step we passed it by,  
With aching step and weary eye  
Along the road to Passchendaele.*

*In battle order on we went,  
A squad of soldiers nearly spent,  
With sweating faces pale.  
Weary, oh wearily along,  
With snatches of half-hearted song,  
Along the road to Passchendaele.*

*We had not reached to battle zone,  
And trees their greenness still could own  
Untouched by shrapnel hail :  
And here the Iris flourished whole,  
Blue eyed, beside the little pool  
That gems the road to Passchendaele.*

*Then, as each soldier passed it by  
Each fixed it with his weary eye  
As shipwrecked men asail ;  
And sighed or hitched a haversack  
Higher upon an aching back  
—Along the road to Passchendaele.*

*What meant that little purple bloom  
 To us, the sweating sons of Doom  
 Who marched to Horrors Pale ?  
 Oh heart ! It stood for kith and kind,  
 The wondrous world God meant us find,  
 Love—and all fair things left behind  
 Upon the road to Passchendaele.*

J. PAIN.

## ALL HALLOW-E'EN.

(1)

### THE NIGHT WIND.

*All night a lost wind roamed around the house  
 Seeking an entrance, shaking every door,  
 And each of us, remembering his own ghost  
 Said : ' They return no more.  
 It is the wind : only the passing wind.'*

*But, if they could return ? . . . Let someone rise  
 And fling the door wide open to the night.  
 Would fear outshine the welcome in our eyes ?  
 Could we endure the sight ?  
 Would vision strike us blind ?*

*Love should be fearless—or should cast out fear—  
 Enter poor lonely soul, if you are there !*

*The wind is gone, the starry night is clear  
 And fresh the rain-sweet air.*



## (II)

## REQUIEM.

*They are at rest. They do not come and go  
Like lonely winds that wail around the door  
Or restless tides that ever ebb and flow  
To break in sobbing waves upon the shore.  
They are at rest. They shall return no more.*

*They are at rest. Let not our grieving break it.  
Perhaps our tears becloud their finer air.  
Faith's anchor holds, though doubt's wild tempests shake it,  
Let not our storms of weeping reach them there.  
They are at rest, in their Redeemer's care.*

C. M. MALLET.

## PRE-WAR SPORTING DAYS IN IRELAND.

BY COLONEL LEWIS COMYN.

IN their reminiscent moods, soldiers who, in the words of the *Gazette* 'having attained the age limit cease to belong to the Reserve of Officers,' are wont to look back wistfully on the good days spent in Ireland before the War. What a happy hunting ground it was ! What a splendid training area for troops ! Whatever truth or slander there may be in the American's description of present-day Ireland—'The finest open-air lunatic asylum in the world'—it is certainly true that in those days it was the finest recreation ground in the world for officers of His Majesty's Services. And not for officers only. Young Englishmen from the Universities and some young Americans, too, in the early years of the present century discovered in Ireland the ideal conditions in which to learn the art of hunting hounds without excessive publicity. The remoter Irish hunts, not at any time too well-endowed with rich subscribers, and feeling the draught caused by the expropriation of the big landlords under the Wyndham Land Purchase Act, were willing to take a chance and suffer the agonies of an embryo gentleman-huntsman if he looked a likely sort and were prepared to accept a reduced subscription while still promising to uphold the best traditions of these famous hunts. How faithfully this promise was kept nobody has ever sought to question.

Isaac Bell is probably the best known among the group of young men who started hunting foxhounds in this way. He arrived in Galway in 1903 from America, via Cambridge

University. 'Ikey' had a way with him, as they say in Ireland, which quickly endeared him to the warm-hearted hunting men, covert-owners and country people. In addition to this he was one of the best men of his generation to ride across country; the rottener and more razor-edged the banks the more he seemed to relish them. At the same time a great lover of hounds and an earnest student of everything pertaining to them—as anybody can see who has read his book *Foxiana*—it is not surprising that from 1903 to 1908 he showed such sport with the Galway Blazers as had not been seen since the days of their famous Burton Persse whose almost legendary mastership extended over a period of fifty years. From Galway Ikey Bell went to Kilkenny, which country he continued to hunt until 1922, except for the break caused by his absence on war service. 'The best scenting country in the world' was how he once described Kilkenny to me.

A succession of English gentlemen-huntsmen followed Bell in Galway, among them Harry Vane, Norman Loder and Joe Pickersgill. Loder was not quite a novice, for he had hunted a pack in England for at least one season before coming to Galway. His charm of manner and his perfect horsemanship won him immediate popularity in a country where such characteristics meet with quick appreciation. It was said that Loder modelled himself on Arthur Pollok, who was then hunting the Kildare hounds. He had ample opportunities for this while staying at the Curragh with his uncle, Major Eustace Loder, who bred 'Pretty Polly.' Anyhow, no better model than Arthur Pollok could a future huntsman have chosen, for he was one of the best amateur huntsmen that Ireland has produced. In his time he has hunted many packs in Ireland, including Limerick in later years under the mastership of his cousin, 'Atty' Persse.

Major Thomas Bouch was another Englishman who came to learn the art of hunting in Ireland, from Oxford University via the 10th Hussars. What better preparation could a man bring to this very scientific occupation than a University education followed by three years in a cavalry regiment? Is it not sad to reflect that henceforth service in a cavalry regiment will not necessarily prove of any particular benefit to a future master of hounds or horses? Tommy Bouch chose the East Galway hounds for his earliest efforts in huntsmanship, a trappy country to hunt and ride over, with a good proportion of bog and, therefore, well calculated to lay the seeds of knowledge and experience which bore good fruit when he transferred to the Tipperary a year later. That was in 1909 when the famous 'Dick' Burke, who had hunted Tipperary for umpteen years, resigned. A difficult man to follow, truly, but Bouch came through the ordeal triumphantly, and I remember the wave of regret which surged through the Tipperary Hunt when he transferred to the Atherstone in 1911.

The Army point-to-point at Knocklong, in the centre of John Ryan's Black and Tan country, was a fearsome performance. To see a field of never less than thirty young officers in the light-weight race charge the first fence, a big hairy bank where there was only room for about four horses to jump abreast, was a sight one is never likely to forget.

One year my regiment had arranged to hold a regimental meeting over the same course, and we were very chagrined when our Divisional Commander, General Parsons, himself a keen hunting man, declined our invitation to come to the meeting and act as a steward. Very courteously he explained that he did not approve of point-to-point racing. 'For many months in the year,' he said, 'you train your young horses to gallop up cool and well-collected to these huge

Tipperary and Limerick banks and then one fine day you pull them out and gallop at break-neck speed at the same fences. Is it any wonder that I have seen many a promising hunter turned into a bad racehorse?' Those were days, of course, when any horse trained in a racing stable, no matter for how short a time, was debarred from running in a point-to-point, certainly in the Army point-to-point. Some of us older men have never ceased to regret that this rule should have gone by the board.

Hunting in Ireland one meets with many quaint situations such as no other country seems capable of producing. I remember one day when I had promised to give the local doctor a lift in my car to the meet. He kept me waiting a good fifteen minutes at his surgery and, being himself a mad keen hunting man, he was profuse in apologies and very much annoyed that an urgent and unexpected case had unavoidably detained him.

We had not gone many miles when our progress was slowed-up by a man standing on the road with outstretched arms. Recognising the doctor, he thanked God and all the angels because, as he explained, he was just starting for the village to fetch the doctor to his wife, who was in the throes of child-birth and very bad, he said.

The doctor swore under his breath. Aloud he said, 'I can't possibly attend to her now, Pat. You must get Dr. . . . This gentleman here is driving me to the meet and I have already delayed him' . . . etc., etc. Weepingly Pat begged and prayed. Firmly the doctor protested that he could not wait, and to clinch the argument he said, 'What good can I do anyhow, I have no instruments with me.'

Feeling that it was mainly on my account that this usually kind-hearted doctor was so adamant in his refusal, I thought it time to intervene and I said that if he did not go in I should

do so myself. So in he went and I waited once more in the car. Soon Pat came out with a message. 'The doctor's compliments and would Your Honour send him in his hunting-crop and Your Honour's own hunting-crop!' Another ten minutes and then the doctor emerged, looking very cross in contrast to Pat whose face was now wreathed in smiles. Dropping into the seat beside me and throwing the two whips he was carrying into the back of the car, the doctor said, 'Drive on for God's sake or we'll never see hounds this day.' In the circumstances I devoted all my attention to the business of persuading the old Ford car to gallop faster than ever she had been asked to do before. The swaying of the car and the rain-sodden muddy road made our progress a veritable nightmare, but the doctor never moved a muscle. Only when we came round a corner on two wheels, and found the hounds still drawing the first covert, did I venture to ask him, 'Was it a boy or a girl?'—'I don't know,' he said, as he hurled himself out of the car, 'I had no time to look.' To this day I do not know whether he really used the hunting-crops or whether he was just pulling my leg. I was not able to fathom the meaning of an enigmatic wink which Pat gave me, behind the doctor's back, as the car plunged away from the cottage door.

Another day I was out with the Ward Union Staghounds, the only day I have ever had with this famous Dublin pack. At the meet I noticed a callow youth on a very good-looking well-bred young mare. We got away quickly and hounds ran fast over a big line of country, in the course of which we passed at the back of Fairyhouse Racecourse stand. Very early on I noticed my youthful friend sailing away in front of me. I was well mounted, but all my efforts to get on terms with him failed. The mare was pulling him

a bit, he was having a rough passage, but I could see he was enjoying every moment of it. The hunt ended after about forty minutes of the best, and I determined to make some enquiries about the young mare, as I felt sure the boy was the son of some local farmer and was schooling the mare with a view to selling her to an officer. She was just the type 'likely to win a point-to-point.' So I approached the youth and said, 'By Gad, that mare carried you well in that hunt.' His reply, made with glowing eyes and obvious sincerity, was so unexpected that I feel it deserves to be recorded. 'Well look-it here,' he said, 'for the first two miles she was kickin' the dogs from under her feet.' May I add, for the sake of the Ward Union Hounds, that the statement was not literally true, but it expressed in picturesque language the impression which his ride had left upon him, and, to a certain extent, upon me.

In another part of the country there was a great sportsman, whose mother owned and ran a very good hotel in the little town. Arthur P—— was quite the most amusing 'character' in a country where such characters are by no means scarce. But he had the not-uncommon failing that he drank too much. About the time when I first got to know him he had begun to develop fits of D.T. I took such a liking to him that I thought I must try to take him in hand. So one day I said to him, 'Tell me, Arthur, do you know when you have a fit coming on? Do you know when you are really in D.T.?' Instead of resenting the question, as I feared he might, he answered with a twinkle in his eye, 'Well, it's this way, Captain. When you're lying in the bed and suddenly you see a little old man wid' a tall hat on him poppin' up and down at the end of the bed, you might think you have them then but you haven't got them at all, at all. And when you see a rat coming out of one corner

of the ceiling upside down and stealing across to the opposite corner, you might think you have them then but—not at all. But, Captain,' said he, and here he got very earnest and confidential, 'when you put down your hand to take up the jerry and a woodcock rises up out of it and flies out the window without ever breaking the glass, then you can be nearly sure you have the D.T.'s.'

In pre-war days there was no dearth of shooting in Ireland for army officers. Mostly rough shooting because big covert shoots, where thousands of pheasants are raised, were never very numerous in that country. But snipe, duck and woodcock were to be had in most places, and the writer would venture to urge that, on the whole, such sport is much better fun than a battue of hand-reared pheasants.

At one station my regiment rented a wide area of bog and woodland for the sum of £10 per annum. The first time we shot the woods we got 25 couple of woodcock and in four subsequent shoots the bag never was below 10 couple. Any afternoon an officer taking out his gun on the bog could be pretty sure of picking up 3 or 4 couple of snipe.

Then again, fishing was almost as popular in summer as the hunting and shooting in winter, although officers were not able to devote so much time to it owing to the exigencies of collective training. Dapping on the lakes in the early part of June was specially sought after and cost hardly anything. The salmon fishing was also far better and cheaper than in recent years, but this is a phenomenon not peculiar to Ireland.

Salmon-fishing reminds me of an amusing incident at the county town where I was quartered. I was returning from leave by train from Dublin, and the other occupant of my compartment was a very good-looking Englishman,



obviously over on a fishing holiday to judge from the amount of tackle which accompanied him. We were soon deep in conversation about sport in Ireland. He seemed very well informed on the subject and indeed on any subject which arose. Our journey passed with unwonted celerity. As the train drew into our station he asked me if I were a member of the County Club and, if so, would I be kind enough to put up his name for ten days' temporary membership. He had not told me his name and one hesitates in such cases to make oneself responsible for total strangers, however charming they appear to be. So I hedged a bit and said if he would come up to the club I would see the steward about getting one of the committee to put him up for membership. The steward, however, said that no reference to the committee was necessary provided that the gentleman was a member of one of the London Clubs to which our club was affiliated for just this purpose (mostly service clubs).

'What is your club, sir?' asked the steward.

'Marlborough,' answered the stranger.

Unfortunately the steward had never heard of the Marlborough Club, and I could see that the stranger had dropped several points in the steward's estimation.

'Very sorry, sir, but the Marlborough club is *not* on our list.'

From the tone of freezing finality with which this verdict was announced it was evident that, mentally, the steward had already catalogued the Marlborough among the less reputable London night-clubs. The stranger looked across at me with a faint smile and just the suggestion of a wink.

'As a matter of fact,' he said to the steward, 'I belong to several London clubs,' and he reeled off a list of half a dozen well-known clubs.

Mercifully, the steward at last found one of these 'on our list,' and the situation was saved, or so it seemed—but not quite.

'What name, sir?' asked the steward, producing the Visitors' Book.

'Francis of Teck,' came the reply.

Now the steward had never heard of a gentleman with a name like that. He had a hazy notion there was a saint named something like it, but saints were not gentlemen, and gentlemen were not saints (ten years' stewardship of the County Club had left him in no doubt on that point!). So, at once, all his previous misgivings about the stranger's credentials were revived. The matter was finally settled only after I had taken the steward aside and explained, at some length, that the gentleman was His Royal Highness Prince Francis of Teck, brother of the Princess of Wales, as Queen Mary was at the time. Later in that week the Prince told me with a smile that he thought he was living down the dubious impression created at his introduction to the club. Prince Francis was a fine all-round sportsman, with an attractive personality. His early death was a sad loss to the country.

How much Eire has lost annually in terms of £ *s. d.* by the withdrawal of the English 'garrison' is a question which the present administrators of that country would probably not care to discuss. They would put the matter on a higher plane and argue that although 'the captains and the kings depart' Eire has at least attained the captaincy of her own soul. Be that as it may, practical Englishmen may be interested to know that in pre-war days it was reckoned that a battalion of infantry was worth £1,000 a week to the small town fortunate enough to have barracks to accommodate them. It is easy to see, therefore, how

much a little place like Fermoy must have lost. My recollection is that two battalions and a brigade of artillery were quartered there. Nowadays, Fermoy must be like one of those distressed areas in England where the sole industry of the locality has ceased to be marketable. In several Irish townships the British Army was the sole industry.

There may be room for two opinions as to what Eire has gained or lost as the result of the treaty. There can be only one opinion as to what British Army officers have lost in respect of all sporting amenities but especially hunting, shooting and fishing. This loss is almost irreparable. There is simply no other place in or outside the Empire where such things are to be had, even if money were no object. To some extent the loss may be mitigated for officers who elect to spend their two months' leave in Eire. The hunting, at least, is almost as good as ever and officers can be assured of a cordial welcome from all classes. Two months' leave, however, is a very different thing from being quartered in the old Ireland all the year round. Gone are the opportunities for those intimate social contacts, the visits to the country horse-shows, the small race-meetings, the horse fairs and rubbing shoulders with all and sundry which were such a delightful feature of pre-war soldiering in Ireland.

## THE TROUBLE TREE.

BY BEATRICE WASHBURN.

'Hot diggity dog,' Lazarus was heard to exclaim to our stalwart cook, Azalea. 'Woman, you ain't seen nothin' yet.'

'I ain't sayin' what I seen and what I ain't seen,' contended Azalea, 'and don't you hot diggity me, you no-count coloured person. Is I askin' you a simple direct question or is I ain't?'

Our servant's repartee, refreshing as it was for a few moments, was apt to become repetitious and exasperating to a student of the English language.

'What's it all about?' demanded my husband, strolling towards the window to gain a better view of the controversy. 'Is she asking him, by any chance, what became of the roast chicken that was left for a moment unguarded on the kitchen table last week?'

'She knows better than to do that,' I assured him. 'No, it's about the magnolia tree. The big one in the back meadow that seems to be so popular with the negroes. You know how they come up to it from all parts of the plantation.'

'What does he say?' asked my husband. 'There isn't anything very remarkable about that tree and yet they just can't seem to leave it alone. They walk to it at all hours of the day just to touch its branches.'

'He says it's a trouble tree,' I repeated perplexed. 'Whatever that means.'

My husband shook his head and he asked of Azalea when she brought in the drip coffee after dinner.

'What's all this I hear about a trouble tree, Azalea? Is there anything wrong with that magnolia?'

'No, suh,' said the coloured woman smoothly and immediately. 'Der ain't nothin' wrong wid dat tree. Nothin' wrong at all. Only some trees is born to trouble, just like some folkses is.'

'Well,' said my husband, pouring the brandy into his demi-tasse. 'It's certainly had an easy enough life so far. I planted it myself when I was a boy and so far as I know that tree has never had a care in the world. You are imagining things, Azalea.'

But after he had left the room he referred to it again. 'I don't like it,' he said gravely. 'When they begin talking like that. See if you can extract any information from Lazarus.'

But Lazarus, our stately gardener, was even more non-committal than usual. He said the magnolia tree was O.K. The flowers were O.K. The leaves were O.K., too. 'No, ma'am, dere wahn't nothin' wrong wid dat tree. It was as fine a magnolia as you would see in all Louisiana.'

'I know that,' I admitted as I stood looking up at its tremendous height, almost equal to that of the pines that soared into the hot blue sky. To-day its leaves were as shiny as though they had been polished and the great white blossoms shone like candles. They were lovely enough to put into a big bowl on the hall table, I thought as I reached out my hand to pluck one.

'Don't touch it,' screamed Lazarus suddenly. I pulled my hand away. Our old gardener was shaking and his face had become almost grey with fright.

'What is it, Lazarus?' I demanded sternly. 'You must tell me. What is wrong with that tree?'

He only shook his head and mumbled. There was no getting anything further out of the negroes. Behind them stretch centuries of superstition and black magic. They have learned to conceal it from the white man with uncanny skill.

We had the department of agriculture man come out to look at the magnolia and he only laughed and said it was a splendid tree. Nothing wrong with it anywhere. Just a normal magnolia, a good deal stronger than most.

‘One of the handsomest I ever saw,’ he remarked, after he had examined it with ladders. ‘Negroes have fool ideas somehow. Probably they worship that tree or something. Sometimes they do that. You’d be surprised.’

‘He may be right,’ said my husband when we talked it over. ‘Just tell them to keep away from the magnolia and see that they do.’

We issued the order and for days the back meadow was deserted. No one even crossed it on the way to the cotton-fields. And then one morning, after a heavy rain, we found the ground about it a molten mass of mud. Footprints of every description were printed in that chocolate-coloured slime. Great naked footprints and the slim feet of women and the tiny footprints of children. We had heard nothing in the night but then, the magnolia tree was a long way from the house, and yet they must have staged a mob scene underneath its branches. There was no use in questioning Azalea. She said she knew nothing about it. So we sent Lazarus down into the back meadow to smooth down the tumbled ground.

‘I ain’t touchin’ dat tree,’ we heard him tell Azalea in the kitchen. ‘Don’ you fret, woman. I ain’t so much as lay a hand on dat dar trouble tree.’

But he touched it in spite of himself. Standing idly at

my bedroom window I watched Lazarus spade the earth up around the roots of the great magnolia preparatory to smoothing it down. As he stooped in the thick mud he slipped and threw out his arm to guard against a tumble and his hand brushed the bark of the great tree. It was a long way off so I could not hear what he said, but suddenly, as though by a signal, a wail broke out from the kitchen beneath me—the long, eerie, blood-curdling wail that the negroes sometimes emit in a moment of sheer terror. You cannot have lived in the South without at some time having heard that hair-raising sound—a heritage from the jungle, from the old, dark days of savagery. It pierced the quiet summer morning and we saw the negroes come hurrying up from behind the swamp. They had left their work in the cotton-fields and the barn and the kitchen as they recognised that primeval call.

‘Go on back to your work,’ said my husband sternly, standing on the back verandah to stem the straggling tide of people. ‘Nothing is wrong. Forget about it and go back to work.’

They hesitated, murmured, looked about uneasily and watched Lazarus as he came slowly back from the meadow, brushing the mud off his sleeve. Obviously he was not hurt and I was as much puzzled by that strange call as were the negroes themselves. Lazarus grinned sheepishly when he saw us, but his face was grey about the mouth.

‘Jes tumbled myself down,’ he assured us. ‘Wahn’t nothin.’ But the next morning he was ill. Very ill, we were assured by Azalea, who brought us the news with the morning coffee. He had high fever and pains in his head.

‘We’ll have the doctor,’ said my husband, but Azalea looked uncertain. ‘Doctors ain’t goin’ to cure what ails him. Ain’t no use callin’ no doctor.’

But we had him just the same and he came out of Lazarus's room behind the wood shed shaking his head and looking puzzled. 'I can't account for it,' he stated. 'Fever 105 and screaming with pain in his head and internal bleeding. Better move him to the hospital in town.'

'I'll get out the car,' said my husband and we hurried to wrap the suffering negro in cool sheets and put him on a stretcher. But when we brought him out on the driveway we saw every negro on the plantation standing there, a solid block of people to impede our progress. They moved a step forward as though they had been one person.

'Ain't goin' to take old Lazarus to town, Massah Charles,' said one young negro man who looked after the vegetable beds. 'No white doctor ain't gwine to cure him. We see to dat right here on dis plantation. Leave him here and we cure him, sure as you is born, Massah Charles. Give you' own coloured folkse a chance.'

My husband was born in the South and he understands the negroes.

'All right,' he said quietly, looking them over. 'It's a bargain. I'll give you till midnight to-night. If his fever hasn't dropped by then we take him into town to the hospital. Is that fair?'

'Fair enough,' murmured two women in the front row. 'Thank you, Massah Charles. We takes care of our own.' They milled around a little, talked together and finally dispersed.

'Are you insane?' I asked indignantly as we carried the delirious negro back to his bed. 'Do you want to kill him?'

'You don't know them as I do,' said my husband quietly, bathing the feverish old face with a cold cloth. 'You're too smart for this country, my girl. I suppose you would



laugh if I were to tell you that this is black magic. Something the cleverest doctor cannot treat. You wait. They'll cure him themselves.'

But they did not seem to. The day dragged on, so hot that even the birds did not sing and the sun lay like melted butter on the great galleries. There was not a breath of air anywhere and not a sound, either. For once there was no singing in the fields. Azalea and her helpers shuffled back and forth through the house without a word. The plantation almost might have been deserted. And old Lazarus grew worse and worse.

His fever rose higher and he seemed to be wasting away before our very eyes. You could almost see his cheek-bones start out of his face and his eyes sink deeper into his head.

'A good doctor and a hospital is what he needs,' I declared as Azalea and I applied ice-cloths to that fever-ridden body.

'Wait,' said Azalea, just as my husband had done, and because there was nothing else to do we waited while the sun dropped into the forest and the fields outside turned black. There is no twilight in our Southern country. As soon as the sun sets it is dark. 'The Big Dark,' as the negroes call it.

Old Lazarus still lay moaning on his bed when the moon bounded out of the pine-trees as though it had been released from some deep hiding-place and made an orange-coloured path across the lawn. As it soared into the sky the silence of the plantation was broken by a sound that was like the rustling of innumerable leaves or the tramping of many feet. A rhythm seemed to come out of the forest like the rhythm of the wind, only it was louder and more regular.

'It sounds like a drum,' I said to my husband in astonishment and he answered :

‘It is a drum. Don’t you remember Josepha’s son who plays in the night club in town?’

But this was no night club, rather an old drum out of old, old Africa, beating a mysterious message across the dark jungles of the Congo. *Tum*, tum, tum, *Tum*, tum, tum, it throbbed. One loud beat and two soft ones. Probably the first and oldest rhythm in the world.

We heard them dancing long before we could see those broken bits of darkness leaping against a darkness still more black. And when the moon rose they proved to be our familiar negroes on the plantation capering in wild abandon around the big magnolia tree.

The voice of that great drum filled the air. It was not music. It was raw and primitive sound, like that of the tides or the winds and it had a ferocity that seemed to trouble the sick man on his bed. He moaned and coughed and twitched to that harsh rhythm.

‘It’s O.K., missy,’ said a quiet voice beside me and there was Azalea, wet cloths in her hand. ‘We cure him. You see.’

A bright light flashed into the room, brighter than the moon, and the crackling of flames split the night outside. A torch of fire soared into the sky.

‘It’s the old magnolia,’ said my husband. ‘I knew it. This has happened before. My father had a trouble tree on this same plantation. They burned it down.’

‘Yassuh,’ Azalea answered him. ‘You understands, Massah Charles, ain’t many white folks understands black magic.’

She went on to tell him, in a quiet voice, what he already knew because he had seen it happen before, when he was a little boy.

The big magnolia was a trouble tree. Folkses had to

have something to lay their troubles on. White folks was different. They could stand their troubles themselves. Sometimes it didn't seem like they had no hearts. But coloured people had a long, weary road behind them and a long, weary road ahead. If they could take their sorrows out and lay them away it was so much easier going. So on the plantation it was the magnolia tree. No one knowed how it got to be a trouble tree. Some trees was born like that. But it was a great comfort. Everyone came to it with their troubles. You just had to lay what was worrying you on its branches and your heart got lighter. Maybe it was a lost child or a husband who didn't love you any more. Maybe it was a sickness or a worriment over debt or a loved one dying before your eyes. Everyone had troubles and the tree was carrying them all. Only you had to be careful. If anyone touched a trouble tree he caught all the trouble himself, like old Lazarus there. Then there wahn't nothing to do but conjure the tree, and then burn it down. Folkses had to take back their own troubles now, Azalea sighed heavily. All but old Lazarus. He would get well because his own people had conjured him. Look at him now, Massah and Missey.

'Sure enough,' said Lazarus, sitting up in bed, his teeth flashing in a smile. 'I'se O.K. Everything's O.K. now, Massah Charles. Don' you go worryin' no more.'

Outside on the lawn the big magnolia was burned to ashes and the lawn was empty except for the fantastic splendour of the moon.

The drum was silent and there was no sound at all but the mocking bird singing to himself far down in the shadow of the forest.

*Louisiana.*

*BY THE WAY.*

UNLESS—as some think—the international crisis of this summer is but a prelude, we have survived through a time of unparalleled diversity of emotion : concern, anxiety, dread, resolve, relief, thankfulness, misgiving have succeeded one another with rapidity. On the first page of this issue I give one experience which is, I believe, the dominant result : coupled with that sense of the personal watchfulness of God, has gone, human nature being so curiously compounded, an intense exasperation that millions should have been put to such vast expense, inconvenience and apprehension by the reckless determination of a single man. That at least, we may legitimately expect, will never be allowed in this world's chequered history to happen again : as long as that is possible, there is established no secure foundation for enduring peace. And meanwhile let us steadfastly remember the truth of the saying about the strong man armed.

\*       \*       \*

But is it not a remarkable proof of the adaptability of Man that it is precisely those who so strongly criticize the country for not having gone to war who used every effort to prevent it ever going to war effectively ? One further question—a more comforting one—have ever before in the world's history the peoples (as apart from the Governments) shown the unmistakability of their passionate wish for peace ? Of this at least all dictators hereafter must take strict account.

\*       \*       \*

English as she is spoke :—As I was passing a scaffolding on which were some workmen I heard one say to his mate, 'Putya polya.' I looked to see whether the speaker were Balkanese or Japanese, but, seeing that he was a true-blue

British workman, I successfully employed a knowledge of our mother tongue acquired over many laborious years of London study and translated the mystic order from the vernacular to its literary counterpart, namely, 'Put your pole there !'

\*       \*       \*

Two books are published by Methuen which have this at least in common, that they are, unhappily, the last works of their respective authors, the first the unfinished history of *English Poetry* by John Drinkwater (6s. n.), and the second, the final essays, *Adventures and Misgivings*, of E. V. Lucas (6s. n.). The first is issued with a preface by St. John Ervine, which is the work of a friend and as such generously enthusiastic, and the history, which ends all too soon with an uncompleted sentence on John Donne, is as fresh and attractive as anything Drinkwater ever wrote. The arts of creation and of criticism are essentially different, even though every creator, after creation, must turn his mind to criticism—a task which some have performed well and others ill : whatever hereafter may be the judgment on John Drinkwater as a creative poet there can be no doubt that he was a balanced and learned critic of great merit—and this, his last book, is admirably done. To my mind the two best services it renders are, first, that it insists throughout that 'poetry takes no stock of fashions, has no vocation to be up to date' and secondly, that it gives a clearly reasoned explanation and spirited defence of the virtues of the sonnet, in particular of the Shakespearean sonnet, which is often slighted in an age that prides itself on technical inefficiency. It is sad indeed that Death stayed Drinkwater's pen at Donne. The second book is 'E. V.', unchanged, his natural force unabated, his zest and interest undimmed—a characteristic farewell from one of the best-loved, all-round men of recent times : he never wrote badly and he wrote

about almost everything, 'I have outgrown most of my youthful desires for a future,' he writes in one of these last essays—that at least is untrue; he never outgrew his youth in any respect, and long indeed it will be before his memory is cold.

I should like to be able also to commend the *Last Stories* by the late Miss Mary Butts (Brendin, 5s.), who at her best had both a sensitiveness of imagination and a skill of pen that gave promise of notable work, had she lived longer: but truth compels me to say that there is only one of the thirteen stories contained in this posthumous collection which seems to me deserving of disinterment; that is the exceptionally clever reconstruction of a dramatic episode in the youth of Julius Caesar, which originally appeared in these columns. The other twelve are wholly different both in calibre and setting: they are modern and either lacking in form and weight or rancidly sexual. Mary Butts had already shown that she was capable of much better things.

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The firm of Batsford has a deservedly high reputation for illustrated books whether of art or topography: the latest is *The Spirit of India* by W. J. Grant (10s. 6d. n.), who informs us that he has spent twelve odd years in the East and is understood to have been at one time editor of the *Rangoon Times*. I am under the impression that Rangoon is in Burma, so that the qualification is perhaps not wholly authoritative: however that may be, though doubtless the text provides a great deal of information for the ignorant and a defence, *inter alia*, of child marriages, which Mr. Grant calls 'only an ugly coping for a beautiful wall'—whatever that means, nevertheless this is not a book that will be valued for its letter-press. No one wants to read as a commentary upon the political changes such inapposite generalities as 'politically what we have done in India is to remove a holy mountain in order to sink a drain-pipe'—

but many will greatly enjoy the admirably varied and excellently produced photographs, and of these there are 140 and a coloured frontispiece in addition.

★      ★      ★

And now comes a volume which has just the two qualities that are of all others most desirable in a record of experience, namely, interest and humour: to readers of CORNHILL Major C. S. Jarvis needs no commendation and in various articles here published as well as in his admirable *Three Deserts*, he has given abundant evidence of his possession of these two qualities, but he has never displayed them to better advantage than in his new volume, *Desert and Delta* (Murray, 10s. 6d. n.). Here indeed is the ripe experience of a Governor coupled with humour as unfailing as it is penetrating: the book should be not only read and enjoyed but carefully studied and digested by all who have to do with Egypt and the Arabs—it will be read and enjoyed by very many who will say with truth ‘how simple problems of administration would be if always approached in the spirit animating these pages,’ who will say also, ‘how rich England must be in administrators if she can afford to let such a one still in the prime of observation and wit take his passion for making the desert blossom like a rose into retirement in the New Forest.’ A pungent, delightful, and most valuable contribution to the story of British endeavour.

★      ★      ★

Studies of unpleasant people are undeniably popular, possibly because the world to-day has so many examples, possibly because they are much more attractive to read about than to meet or possibly because it is easier to make interesting a bad than a good character. However that be, here is another, a first novel and one well worthy of attention—John Randolph Richards’s *The Day will Come* (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.). Mr. Richards’s novel is a very able, concentrated

study of a man of energy and ambition who is both ruthless and sensual, but it avoids, cleverly, ever being beastly. Randall certainly is hateful and there is undeniably an element of horror in his utterly selfish career ; but the story of his life does not call for an inverted kind of commendation. Many a popular detective story has much more horror in it—and without blame attached thereto. Randall lets nothing stand in the way either of his ambition or his pleasures ; he indulges in seduction, he does not stop at murder, but the total effect is interest rather than horror and Mr. Richards makes capital use of his knowledge of the booksellers' world. Whether Randall, as carefully drawn throughout nine-tenths of the story, would really have so rashly committed his final crime or, having done so, have given way as described, may be disputed ; but there can be no doubt that Mr. Richards has made a notable start with his first venture into fiction.

★       ★       ★

Those who are on the lookout for a novel that is different from the general run might do a great deal worse than read *Doctor Dido*, F. L. Lucas's story (Cassell, 7s. 6d. n.). F. L. Lucas himself needs no introduction, but this is, I think, the first time he has tried his hand at a full-length novel. It is a tale set at Cambridge in the days of Napoleon told with all the knowledge of Cambridge life, ways, and surroundings that we should expect from the author, and concerned with picturing the history of an unusual love against not only that background but also the Napoleonic scene. The title, though fully explained before the story closes, is the least happy thing about the book and may handicap its popularity, but it deserves to be read and appreciated : both Dr. Plampin and Sophie will not readily fade from the reader's remembrance.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 181.

PRIZES of books to the value of £1, from John Murray's catalogue, are offered to the two solvers whose letters are first opened. Answers, containing the coupon from page v, must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must reach him by 30th November.

'Call'd him soft names in many a ——— ———,'

1. 'Tis a brave ——— ;  
Let it have scope :  
Follow it utterly,  
Hope beyond hope :'
2. '——— this myrtle shade,  
On flowery beds supinely laid.'
3. 'Who shall ——— that Fortune grieves him  
While the star of hope she leaves him ?'
4. 'Maidens who from the distant hamlets come  
To dance around the Fyfield ——— in May,'
5. 'No, no, the utmost share  
Of my ——— shall be  
Only to kiss that air  
That lately kissèd thee.'

Answer to Acrostic 179, September number : 'The clouds that gather round the setting sun' (Wordsworth : Ode 616). 1. ChiminG (Francis Mahoney : 'The Bells of Shandon'). 2. LeA (Gray's 'Elegy'). 3. OuT (William Blake : 'Hear the Voice'). 4. UnderneatH (Fitzgerald : 'Omar Khayyâm'). 5. DesirE (Matthew Arnold : 'To Marguerite'). 6. ScatteR (Shelley : 'Ode to the West Wind').

The first correct answers opened were sent by E. F. Tempest, 28 Wade's Hill, N.21, and Miss R. Rogers, Dartville, Dittisham, Dartmouth, who are invited to choose books as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*

THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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DECEMBER 1938.

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LAST OF THE ENGLISH.

BY LORD GORELL.

III. A CUP O' TEA.

MRS. BROWN of Bermondsey : *The Present Day.*

MRS. BROWN. What I say is I want a cup o' tea  
And forty winks : my feet are something  
chronic . . .  
My, but I'm short o' breath : those stairs are  
cruel.  
Blest if I'm not half burstin' out of my stays !  
Ho-ho ! They'll have to last me, burst or  
tidy,  
Till my ship comes home—and that is that  
. . . Oh, lordy,  
How cold it is, and I'm half drowned as well ;  
My boots are soaked right through with all  
that slush :  
But that don't matter now : I'll take 'em off  
And then my stockin's—so—and wrap my  
feet  
In this old woollen shawl ; a comforter—  
Who called it that ?—it's what it is, I'm sure.  
Now for my downy . . . ah, that's fine,  
that's perfect.  
I wouldn't change myself this very minute  
For one of those duchesses that's in the  
paper . . .  
And now the kettle's boilin' on the ring.

A cup o' tea—that's all the wealth of the  
world.

As long as I can have mine hot and strong,  
And reg'lar too, the rest o' things don't  
matter.

It's nice to think of all those blackamores  
Picking these leaves for me ; that's what  
they're for,

Those Indian chaps that have the name of  
coolies—

Just because that what's they're not ! Now  
that's a good 'un ;

You're more yourself, Amelia, than you were  
When you come in : down-hearted, not a  
bit ! . . .

Real good and strong, not like that pale, weak  
stuff

That's brought along from China . . . Poor  
old Chinks,

What a time they're having ! What a world  
it is !

You can't pick up the paper nowadays  
But it's full o' horrid messes, bombs and  
wars ;

I've had enough of them to last my time :  
I'm sick o' them, I am. This Hitler chap  
And that old Mussolini—crazy, I call 'em.  
Why can't we have a bit o' quiet times ?  
That's what I'd like to know : who wants  
these rows ?

And then these Spaniards banging at each  
other.

I can't abide these foreigners myself ;

They're always after something, not like us  
That's settled down. We did the grabbin'  
first,

I've heard—perhaps, but accidental-like  
And for the other's good; that's right  
enough,

But it's over now, so don't let's have any  
more . . .

I knew a German once as weren't so bad,  
Although he talked so funny—Alleymans,  
That's what we called 'em when we were  
polite

And Boshes when we weren't, a queer old  
time.

I know one thing, I wouldn't live outside  
This little island, not for stacks o' money.  
It isn't much catch, but there it is, it's England,  
And when you've said that you've said every-  
thing;

And, gospel truth, it's had its share o'  
times . . .

I like a bit of history myself,  
Those colours that they wore—my word, and  
the costumes

They put upon themselves, as I've heard tell  
A fortune on the shoulders of those toffs  
As splashed it about at Court—and all those  
things

That never happened really, couldn't for sure,  
But are a lot o' fun, a kind o' story  
For old folks such as me that's lonesome-like  
To nod upon at whiles: still we were the  
folks

That made a bit of history in the War,  
Don't let's forget—but that wasn't history  
proper ;  
That was the devil's mess we had to straighten,  
Same as we've always had to. ' Peace o' the  
world '—  
I reckon, even if it's meant some bloody old  
wars,  
We've been and kept it somehow. Good old  
England,  
She's a pack o' troubles and it's hard enough  
To keep things decent and your home  
together,  
But, there, that's Life, that is, and not her  
fault :  
She isn't one of these foreign cocks o' the  
walk,  
She's never had the need to swank herself,  
She's simple and she's certain, that's the truth ;  
And she isn't Bolshy any more'n I am—  
She's always the same old girl . . . Ah,  
here's my friend,  
The little book that's got the pictures in it,  
The kings and queens and such-like : this'll  
just do  
To set me dreamin' till it's time for supper . . .  
All cosy—give me England any day !

*(Turns over pages drowsily awhile : sinks back and shuts  
her eyes : then suddenly)*

Good Lord, there's someone sitting like a  
ghost  
Beside the grate, so thoughtful and so quiet

That I'd be scared, if I'd ever had time for  
nerves !

It must be a shadow, o' course ; but it's so  
strange,

The shape of a man dressed all outlandish-like,  
I never saw the equal. It moves, it  
moves !

How did it get there ? What is it I see ?

1ST VISITANT. *I have a vision of the sunrise yet,  
A glorious dawn, although the night be dark :  
This hour will pass. My life, it is most sure,  
Will be to my land as I have planned its course  
In anxious study. I would wish to be  
Before all things a man of peace, to bring  
To this my people knowledge, yet my days  
Are filled with importunities, with strife  
And wrath and hatred : I am weary grown  
With the long tide of buffetings of Fate.*

MRS. BROWN. Do I hear words, half sorrowful and all ?  
He seems to be all heavy with some trouble ;  
And well I know the feeling—heaps o' things  
You have to do when you're all tired out  
And nothing's worth the while ; a sign of  
old age,  
I've heard folks say—and yet he doesn't look  
old,

But only odd, and curious kind o' grand.

1ST VISITANT. *I would be building.*

MRS. BROWN. Oh, he's got ambitions ;  
That's why he sits so melancholy there.

Is that the meaning of him ? Who can he be ?

1ST VISITANT. *Upon the life of Alfred must depend  
The issue of this conflict ; I must strive*

*Beyond despair unshrinking to the end.  
I am the spirit of this land's defence :  
Assailed and tortured, it will overbear  
This perilous present ; there is greatness in it.*

MRS. BROWN. How queerly dreams can talk ! I seem to hear

And not to hear. I thought I heard a voice  
That said his name was Alfred ; I don't know  
What to make o' that. A sort o' whispering  
comes

About my ears ; and yet it's quiet enough  
Am I awake or asleep ?

1ST VISITANT.

*All we who hold  
This heritage must struggle to be free :  
To freedom were we destined, we can breathe  
No air less ample, not for us a choice :  
Wessex demands we conquer or we die.*

MRS. BROWN. Essex, do I hear ? That must mean Epping Forest.

I've had some lovely times there : that was  
the place

For a harmless bit o' fun—before the War.

1ST VISITANT.

*Will war be ever ended ? I must seek  
Steadfastly onward : always there is strife,  
Divisions, weakness. Mine to make this land  
A soul united and the arts of peace  
Enrich and bless my wild and ignorant people.  
To that alone is all my building given ;  
To that alone is my whole life dedicate ;  
That only is a purpose for a King.*

MRS. BROWN. A King ? King Alfred ? Alfred the Great ?  
And here ?

I've heard about him, ever so long ago

When I was a kid at school ; and he's in  
this book

That I've been dozin' over—he was set  
To watch a widow's cakes and he let 'em  
burn.

1ST VISITANT. *Must failure in the smallest act endure,  
Become a ripple on a shoreless ocean,  
For ever spreading ? If in nothing else,  
In that be my remembrance.*

MRS. BROWN. Oh, it's queer  
The thoughts I get ! I seem to hear his voice,  
A kind o' far off faintness in the air.  
He's here, and no one's here—Who's there,  
I say ?

1ST VISITANT. *The soul of England undiscerned and ageless.  
There was a summons and it was obeyed.*

MRS. BROWN. What's that I hear ?

2ND VISITANT. *I heard the summons too.*

MRS. BROWN. Why, Lord alive, I seem to see a shape,  
All misty-like and yet alive as me,  
Moving about where the other strangeness  
sat.

Sit down, sit down—you're givin' me the  
jitters !

2ND VISITANT. *I cannot rest : an urge is in my blood.  
This island is too little ; I was born  
For a greater life than peace in Devon lanes.*

MRS. BROWN. Devon and lanes ? Whatever is this that's  
here ?

It flutters and floats about past all believing !  
It has great boots on and a queer, old cloak !

2ND VISITANT. *My spirit stirs within me and beyond.  
It calls to me to climb the stairs of favour,*



*Unsatisfied, unstayed : it calls to me  
To voyage afar to high adventure vowed  
Beyond the narrow seas. The world is waking  
Out of the sleep that down the years has chained  
The splendours of Man's enterprise, and Hope  
Flames like a beacon riotous on the wind !*

MRS. BROWN. Will it never be still ? I see a figure striding  
Between me and the wall so restless-like  
And dressed so oddly. Who are you that's  
there ?

2ND VISITANT. *To Gloriana let my tribute be.  
I am the Captain of a stirring host  
That will never be forgotten : I am he  
That rose upon ambition, driven on by dreams  
Of a wider destiny, impelled to seek  
Beyond the little greatness of this land,  
Beyond himself, his favour, and the Court,  
Questing for gold and after gold for honour.*

MRS. BROWN. Is it the wind that's rising ? There are sounds  
As though a wave was breakin' on the rocks  
Of the sea-shore—and there are sights as well,  
A wandering, shadowy shape. What is it I  
see and hear ?

2ND VISITANT. *I have begotten Empires in my time ;  
I have scattered seeds that will not wither away,  
Though all the mortal glories of this earth  
Be torn from my weary shoulders.*

MRS. BROWN. Oh, what is it  
That seems to pace so wildly up and down  
And speak to me so madly ?

2ND VISITANT. *I am a man !  
A wild, mad fellow, by your leave, a man  
After old England's heart, a breath untamed*

*That blows as strongly as a western gale.*

MRS. BROWN. Mercy on us !

2ND VISITANT.

*By such the seas are peopled ;  
By such the earth is girdled and made one ;  
By such this land her arc of influence spreads.  
We are the race of venturers unconfined,  
The breed of men of merchandise and war  
Tirelessly seeking for the goal called Life,  
Our homes within our hearts—maybe, we have  
found*

*A richer treasure than our seeking guessed,  
A wider kingdom than our island claims.  
That matters little : we are spirits led.  
And I am Raleigh and my work remains !*

MRS. BROWN. Raleigh ! I've heard the name : don't I  
remember

Some stories about it that I've read some-  
where ?

About a cloak and Queen Elizabeth  
Makin' it muddy for him ? Something else,  
Let's see—potatoes ? Wasn't it him that  
found 'em ?

I know I'm grateful to him if he did.  
Yes, and I know—tobacco ! He was smokin',  
The first as ever tried, and his servant came  
And threw a pail of water over his head !  
I'll bet that servant caught it ! But it shows  
How foolishly they acted in those times,  
In what I've heard were called the good old  
days.

We know a thing or two they never did  
In spite o' their boastin' and their grand  
costumes.

2ND VISITANT. *How little all men ever sought to do  
 Divells in the world's remembrance ! And yet,  
 and yet  
 It is the truth, despite that, what endure  
 Are not the trifles or the accidents  
 But the spirit intangible, unseen, eternal,  
 The afterglow within the heart of Man.  
 Let Valour lead on to lofty enterprise !*

MRS. BROWN. I still can hear a whisperin' sort o' sound.  
 It's the wind in the trees outside, I'll bet my  
 life.  
 There's nothing there, there couldn't be, o'  
 course :  
 My fancy's bolted clean away with me.  
 Yet I'm not one for fancies, I'm too English  
 And have to get my livin', that's to say,  
 I'm not a one to have the mind for fancies.  
 It comes o' livin' lonesome by myself,  
 Yet, I don't know, it's queer enough and all,  
 But I've a feelin' I'm not by myself  
 But, as it were, a part o' bigger things,  
 Things that have gone before and left them-  
 selves  
 In some strange way behind for me to share.  
 I reckon, though, that whisperin' was the last.  
 All's still again : I shan't have dreams no  
 more . . .

God bless my soul, but there's another of'em,  
 A one-armed dandy boy in an old blue coat !  
 I've seen his face before somewhere or other—  
 ' A present from Portsmouth ' : it was on  
 that mug

That Herbert gave me once, I'll take my oath.  
Not likely I'd forget, the only thing  
Our Herbert ever gave me, bar a punch on  
the jaw !

3RD VISITANT. *Over the ocean to the grave I go,  
My watch-word 'England's duty.' I have sailed  
The seas of the world, the seas of Life as well :  
There are no other words but, love of country,  
Obedience to her service, sacrifice,  
And courage at all times, that have the power  
To bear a man above the storms of Fate  
As on the wings of God. So much is sure :  
I speak of that I know. I cannot see  
The other side of the earthly argument.*

MRS. BROWN. One-eyed, I thought so.

3RD VISITANT. *Single-eyed am I,  
My colours fastened to the mast, my course  
Fixed as the northern star, no variant ear  
Is mine to England's summons ; that alone  
A changeless music winds about my heart.  
Put the blind eye to all that draws away  
From the straight beams of duty as they rise  
Above the horizon's rim.*

MRS. BROWN. It can't be—Nelson ?  
The little man that's perched up ever so high  
In Trafalgar Square where all the pigeons are,  
The messy things ? The chap that beat the  
Frenchies  
And asked a friend to kiss him as he died ?  
A queer thing that ; I don't believe it's true.  
What makes it come to me ?

3RD VISITANT. *Who shall attend  
My summons in the aftertime but those*

*That call, however lightly, on the name  
Of England? I am in the midst of her,  
I am a part of her strange, stable soul,  
My spirit ever watchful and my story  
A lasting symbol to her service raised.  
Thanksgiving be to England: let her live,  
The freedom of the north wind in her heart  
And all the seas of this tempestuous world  
Beneath her trident roll their strength to peace!  
There lies her splendour, her eternity.*

MRS. BROWN. I think I feel a something, what they call  
Romance, a fluttery kind o' breath  
As though I'd taken the stairs too fast; I hear  
Strange whispers still and my heart's a beaten  
drum.

I belong here, I suppose; I like to feel  
I've something back o' me, though what it is  
Is all a puzzle and a land o' dream.  
At any rate it's kind o' comfortin';  
These foreign folk haven't got it, that I'll  
lay . . .

Now all's gone still again: I can hear the mice  
Behind the wainscot playin'; I'm myself  
And no more fancies to disturb my doze . . .

Lord, am I dreamin' still? I think I see  
Another figure formin': must a body,  
A decent workin' woman, be so plagued?  
Oh, let 'em all come! This one's like myself,  
Thank God for that!—You know, Amelia B.,  
You've not been any too quick to get the  
hang  
Of these high-falutin' ancients and the words

They're tryin' to say. I hope it'll be a case  
 Of *twiggez-vous* for once ; at least this one  
 Is little and a woman and she seems  
 A homely sort, I'm sure—who might you  
 be, mum ?

4TH VISITANT. *Can there be anyone who lived with me  
 Who feels the need of question in her mind ?  
 I am your youth, your strength, your joy of life,  
 I am your simple and unspoken pride.*

MRS. BROWN. She turns her face towards me—it's the  
 Queen !

She was a bit of a woman, but so grand.  
 I saw her once : I waited hours and hours  
 To see her pass ; I never could forget her !  
 No one can walk as Queen Victoria walks—  
 Or walked—which is it ? I am all confused.

4TH VISITANT. *I would not be regarded as the past.  
 I am the present : I am the living sense,  
 The broadened flow of prowess that endures,  
 The centre of the world and all the power  
 That was and is and shall for always be  
 In character, in confidence, in the strength  
 That rests on moral force—not that alone,  
 In the stout will that cannot be afraid  
 Of any challenge to the sense of right.  
 I am not of this island but the world.  
 My thought is everywhere my people are :  
 In every continent and clime I seek  
 Their welfare and the world's, their welfare first.  
 My children are the forces that shall breathe  
 The air of freedom in the world of change  
 That shall be when my life has ebbed away,  
 The forces of the future, nations grown*

*To independent fortitude, a width  
Of British sovereignty, of British peace.  
I am the lodestar of simplicity  
Within my people's life, the queen of home,  
Of virtues ancient as the hearts of men.*

MRS. BROWN. Can it be her voice that's speakin' to me  
now?

4TH VISITANT. *Echoes of old remembrance, of a dim  
Half-consciousness deep cradled in the mind.  
I am, it seems, a multitude, a growth :  
I am the turmoil of the moving times,  
The railroad and the steamboat and the sense  
Of Man's omnipotent range—I am, besides,  
The murmur of a vanished quietness,  
A dignity, a certitude, a poise  
That gazed serenely over Life and Death.  
I am the onset of the teeming towns,  
The murky pageant, and the toiling child.  
All this I am, but, more than all, I am  
The mother of my people and the days  
When England's voice was the clarion of man-  
kind.*

MRS. BROWN. Echoes ! I hear the mice in the wall and the  
wind  
And the rumble of the traffic in the street,  
And yet I hear—I don't know how to name  
it—  
A solemn swell o' sound and a silence too.  
It's very queer : a wildness and a peace  
Are mixed together and I can't be sure  
Which is the greater, which is real, and what  
The meanin's of all this curious whisperin'  
are—

Your Majesty ! Oh, won't you stop and  
tell me ?

I'm only a poor old woman, but I remember  
Your Jubilee and the times before that too,  
Great days they were when I was young and  
pretty,

Not like I am now, old and tired out—  
She's gone as all the other shapes have  
gone.

Was there anyone there at all ? Is it all in  
me ? . . .

*(Rousing at last.)*

God's truth, I have had dreams ! It must  
have been

That kipper that I had at two o'clock !  
I haven't had a drop o' drink all day,  
Not what you might call drink, a glass o'  
stout,

That's all, that's England's liquor and no  
harm :

And yet I've seen and heard such things  
to-night

I'd not believe—voices and visitin' shapes,  
All real enough except that they were dead,  
Most of 'em dead whole ages before I was  
born.

It comes o' lookin' at a history book  
With pictures in it when you're all alone  
And more'n half asleep. Perhaps it means  
That no one's really dead—but that's too  
creepy ;

It'd never do to think like that at all.



No, that's not it : catch hold of yourself,  
my dear.

I suppose that somehow deep in all of us  
There's somethin' of the old folks that have  
gone—

That must be it—and sometimes for an hour,  
Just when it's gettin' dark and everywhere  
The streets are full o' people hurryin' home,  
The thoughts that we've forgotten and the  
things

That have made us what we are come out  
again,

Like bubbles round a basin when you pour  
The water in with a splash. I don't quite  
like it :

It means they're always somewhere here  
about

Bidin' their time to get at you once more.  
Still I can't say that there's real harm in that,  
And history's a chancey sort o' thing  
At the best o' times . . .

Another cup o' tea,  
That'll put me right as rain, if anything will.  
But it makes you think about yourself and all,  
Which isn't pleasant. That's the kind o'  
thoughts

I never put much store by, haven't the mind—  
Or the heart either, for the matter o' that.  
It's not that I'm a coward, but the times  
Are all so different now. When I was a girl  
We hadn't half the things that we've got now,  
But all the same we were happy, I remem-  
ber . . .

Last of the old 'uns : we were English then,  
And didn't take much stock o' foreign things ;  
They're all the young 'uns seem to find to  
praise—

If you stop to listen to 'em. I suppose it's age  
That's creepin' over me ; I'm one o' the last  
To remember how things were. What  
times we had

In the old days before the motor-car,  
Before whole heaps o' things when aeroplanes  
Weren't buzzin' about like a pack o' crazy  
bees !

A lot o' good they've done us ! I never did  
hold

With these new-fangled ways that make you  
skip

Like a crowd o' frightened hens ; it isn't safe  
To poke your nose out now across the pave-  
ment

For fear o' losin' it. And what's the use  
O' harin' about for all the world like fleas,  
I ask myself, if at the end of it

You're just a nasty mess, a bit o' inquest ?  
All that it gets you is a ticket to heaven—  
To hell, more like it—before your proper  
time.

O' course we've got the flicks, and there's  
been times,

When I've been lonesome, out o' sorts and all,  
When I've enjoyed those cuddlin's on the  
screen

And all the goin's on, but, I don't know,  
It wasn't that hard to find a quiet place

To get your hand held in when I was young  
And without the blowin' of a tanner in  
For movin' photographs : and then the  
wireless,

That's right enough if you've a clever boy  
To fix it for you—the same as I have not.  
How Alfie always loved those twiddly things,  
Gadgets or some such word ! Give him a  
spanner

And you had kept him happy all the day . . .  
Ah, well, it doesn't do to think o' him,  
Blown all to bits in France and never found—  
They talk a lot about a bloody new world :  
All I say is—and I'll keep on sayin' it too—  
If they don't put up the price of a cup o' tea,  
I don't see how it'll matter much to me.

(Concluded.)

[It will be obvious that this series was written before the development of, and deliverance from, the Sudeten German crisis—on which Mrs. Brown would, presumably, have made some characteristic comments. It has, however, been left unamended in view of words written to the author in June by an American of wide contacts and great influence who then read it in proof : writing from nearly 6,000 miles away, he said, ' as one reads on, of course one discovers that the play is not about the last of the English at all but about the lasting English. There is as much dynamite in that cup of tea as in Harold's battle-ax. Let the enemies of England be not deceived into thinking otherwise ! ']

*SITTING ON HILLS.*

BY DAVID HOWARTH.

HILLS are connected in one way or another with the major pleasures of many people's lives. Some like climbing up them, and others make a sport of sliding down them ; some, as that psalmist, like looking at them from the bottom, and others, I dare say, even enjoy going up them in those mountain railways which, in the eyes of a mountaineer, render a hill beneath contempt. But fewer people praise the pleasure of simply sitting on a hill-top doing nothing, which to me seems the only object of the climbing up or of the sliding down.

It is true that skill in contemplation was once held high among philosophers, and still remains so in the East. But it has never been a truly native occupation in the West ; and certainly it is unfashionable now. It is called day-dreaming, and is not thought to help a man in his career. And contemplation is less easy than it was, since it requires solitude and silence. (Although I am alone now in my room, so much of life is audible around me : three wireless sets, a barrel-organ, taxis, and a violinist in the street who plays the Londonderry Air.) Perhaps that is the reason why I can only imagine doing nothing, with enjoyment, on a hill, most of my time being spent either in the cities or the hills. But there seems to be some definite connection between this contemplation, or these day-dreams, and the hill-tops. I could not sit quite still and let my thoughts drift if I were sitting, for example, on a plain, however wide and lonely it might be ; and I know of nobody who

does so. Perhaps it would be easier in a wood ; but even there I should by instinct find a bank or slope to sit on. Some sort of hill is a necessity. I have heard it said that a distant view is helpful to a contemplative mood because the eyes are focused on infinity, and in that state are rested and relaxed. And of course it is uncomfortable to sit for long on level ground ; and level ground is damp. But neither of these scientific facts explain to me, to my own satisfaction, my preference for sitting on a hill. I have never managed to achieve true calmness and an end of worry, excepting on a hill. It is a fact ; but I do not yet know why.

Besides a hill, I find, as I have said, that solitude and silence are required. Perhaps it is my lack of contemplative skill which makes these rare things necessary. A skilful and mature philosopher is he, perhaps, who could achieve a state of trance in Oxford Circus, or, like a certain Cambridge don, sincerely fail to recognise his wife when she accosted him in Petty Cury. But for the present I cannot do without this trinity : a hill, and solitude and silence. And many other things are helpful too. One such refinement is to see some gentle distant movement, when I myself am free from the necessity to move. The background of the mountains is the sky, and the slow shifting of the clouds, or the shadow of my own hill in the evening, as it crosses a wide sweep of heather in the valley, will also fill the background of my mind with satisfaction, while the conscious part is off on some trail of logic under some other distant sky. Even human activity is good to watch, provided it is far enough away. Once when I was alone dreaming in the sunlight on top of a peak in the Dolomites, I caught sight of two of the mountain guides from Cortina d'Ampezzo who were forcing a new route up the sheer side of the

valley below me. To call them sheer, those several thousand feet of gaunt red rock, were still an understatement ; for in the middle the wall bulged out, and overhung the valley floor. I watched those amazing men for half an hour or so, and saw the leader climb out over the bulge, like a fly, while the second man paid out the rope from a minute ledge down below. A sudden breeze brought the sound of a hammer on a piton, and I saw the leader threading his rope through the ring on the spike which he had wedged into a crevice, while he held on to the rock with his left hand. Then my eyes wandered off him again, and my thoughts wandered also, far afield. The sun was too warm, and the hills themselves too sleepy, for concentrating either thoughts or eyes.

But then a shout came on the wind. I looked back. He was falling ! He went down jerking on the rope, as one by one the pitons pulled away ; beneath the overhang, clear of the rock-face, the rope falling slack. Then with another jerk, a piton held. He swung like a pendulum on a hundred feet of rope, twenty or thirty feet away from the mountain, with a quarter of a mile of abyss below him.

So much for my dreaming ! I ran down the screes towards the col which lay between us, where there was a climbers' hut in which that morning I had met some German tourists. I had only a vague idea of what I ought to do. Certainly I could not give any direct help to the climbers, either alone or with the tourists, because nobody except a Dolomite guide could have got near them. But I had left my car on the road down in the valley, and I thought that someone might be needed to fetch some help, or take a message to Cortina.

The way down to the hut took me out of view of the two men on the cliff, and when I arrived, with the scree

stones jingling down behind me, I found the German party gone, and the hut itself deserted. I began to feel rather lonely, and I wished that there were someone else to share the responsibility of deciding what to do. I climbed a little buttress of the hill which still hid the climbers from me.

From that different point of view it was harder to discern them, against the menacing expanse of rock broken by a slanting sun into small crevices of shade and shreds of sunlight. I was standing by that time far below them. At first I thought that they had gone, that they must be lying somewhere close beside me. But then I caught a movement, and picked out the second of the pair. He had taken off his rope and slung a spare one round his shoulders, and was climbing alone and undefended towards the place at which the leader came to grief. And then I saw the leader, still twisting slowly round and round like a dead fly on a hanging spider's web. At first I thought he *was* dead, or at least unconscious, injured by the wrench of the rope round his waist as it checked his fall. But then I heard a shout from one of them, and a second voice which answered, and I realised that he did not dare to move, for fear of pulling out another piton.

I shouted, a wordless shout like Scottish shepherds use, and my voice ran round the rocks before it died. An answer in Italian came down to me, but I did not understand it.

'Inglese,' I yelled; and then the answer came: 'O.K.' So I sat down again to watch.

And thus that day, which I had planned to spend so restfully, was spent in a state of constant nervous tension; because that rescue was a drama which no theatre in the world could equal; and I alone was witness of it. Even by the standards of those guides the climb was very difficult,

and to tackle it unroped and single-handed was a feat beyond my own imagination. I did know just enough of mountaineering to understand what they were up against. But tackle it he did, that second man, with no help but the shouted terse advice of his leader who had fallen. Often, for minutes at a time, he stuck at one pitch, and had to return defeated. He often paused to rest, roping his body to a piton, for climbing a vertical wall is very tiring for the fingers. As hours passed, his progress became slower ; and still he had to pass the overhang. And in my safety down below, I tried but failed to keep my mind from dwelling on that awful sight before my eyes if he, like the other man, should fall.

I do not know how long I watched him ; but the ascent was finally successful. He tied his spare rope in a loose knot round the rope on which the fallen man was hanging. Then he climbed down a little way, and tying himself again on to a piton, he shook and slid the slip-knot down, and gently drew the leader in, until he grasped the rock beside him. Then they shook hands, both laughing I suspect ; the leader used his left hand, for with his right he held on for his life.

But I have written of an occasion when day-dreaming was disturbed ; and in fact it is mostly the disturbances in day-dreams which are easily remembered, just as the dreams in sleep stay in the memory, when of the sleep itself no memory exists. The first time I found myself alone in mountains and experienced the pleasure of that state was on the Mont aux Sources on the borders of Natal ; and from those early days also my recollection is of a certain rather odd event, which involved not only me but some companions with whom I spent a night inside a cave.

Anyone who knows that place will agree that it is fairly



desolate. It is about twenty miles from the hostel in the Natal National Park, and eighty from Ladysmith, which is the nearest town. The cave is seven or eight thousand feet above the plain ; and on the other side is Basutoland, with goodness knows how many miles of mountains before the nearest settlement.

On a night in spring four of us who had climbed the mountain together slept in the cold and draughty cave. Three of us were English, and the fourth was a native guide called Charlie, who, I remember, was the only one that night who cleaned his teeth. In the middle of the night, when I was half asleep, I heard someone walking about the cave, bare-footed as I thought, and very quietly. He moved some tin plates which we had there, with the unmistakable clatter which enamel makes. Then either I went to sleep or else he went away.

In the morning I asked my friends : ‘ Who was walking round and falling over the plates last night ? ’ They said they had heard someone and thought it was me ; but as I thought it was them, we decided it must have been Charlie. Later on we asked Charlie, to make sure. His eyes grew larger and rounder. He had thought it was one of us. We assured him it was not, and in the dim light of the cave we timidly looked behind us, and dropped our voices in case we were overheard. We searched the darkest corners ; the cave was empty, and the floor of rock did not bear any traces. But the four tin plates were scattered on the ground.

After that first attempt at mountaineering I fell in with people who were keen on rock-climbing—climbing for its own sake, and climbing in which reaching the top of the mountain and staying there to enjoy it was not thought about. For several years I spent a lot of energy in going up hills by the most difficult way which I could manage.

I understand the satisfaction in setting strength and skill (however much or little one may have) against a natural obstacle, and I like a little danger when it lies entirely in my own hands, or in the hands of friends, to overcome it. (Danger from an actively hostile force is quite another matter.) But through all that time I was embarrassed by a wish to stop wherever I might be, and to conserve for other purposes the energy needed to go further, or even to gain mental energy from the influence of the hills, rather than expend physical energy on a self-imposed conquest of them. I was embarrassed because it was a wish which I could not confess, and because my companions would have called it bone laziness. Perhaps it was ; perhaps it is, for I still have it, but I am not ashamed of it now. I can remember one day when that wish was very strong. I remember a summer afternoon when we reached the summit of Sgurr Alasdair in Skye after a hot and, for me, a rather difficult climb. The air was very still and warm, and the Outer Isles looked as though they were cut out of black paper and stuck on a brilliant silver ground, the western sea and sky being undivided by horizon, so dazzling were the sun and its glass image in the sea. The Cuillin peaks seemed miniature and nearer than was natural, and they moved like liquid ripples in the molten breath of the corries which divided them. We lit our pipes, and the matches burned steadily without the shielding of our hands ; but the flames were hardly visible in the intensity of light which drenched the mountain-top.

I would have liked to stay there on Sgurr Alasdair, and to absorb that peaceful air against adversities, and that visual beauty against whatever ugliness I might encounter. But it was only three o'clock, and we still had time to walk the ridge before the darkness fell, and to cross the pinnacle which

early defeatist mountaineers had called the Inaccessible. It was decided we must do so, and my single voice would not have altered the decision. We put on the blinkers of physical endeavour, and saw no longer the soothing sight of the outer islands in the sea.

But since those grimly energetic days I have spent many days quiet and solitary in the hills—days wasted by all the standards I was educated to respect, but very far from wasted in my own opinion. It is strange that in the modern world, if one wants to do a job which seems worth doing, one must spend the whole of every day, and almost the whole of every week, in doing it. Even a forty-hour week, being spread among five and a half of the seven days instead of concentrated, as it might be, into three, gives little opportunity for an escape to any life away from the surroundings or companions of the job ; and the jobs which seem worth doing seldom confine themselves within their forty hours. It must be all or nothing. Even if one has the skill or fortune to earn enough in six months to last one for a year, one cannot take the next six months as free and well-earned time in which to spend it. So one becomes so busy and so dazed with doing that it is easy to forget the pleasures to be found in being ; and by taking too much thought for making money, one may forget to learn the way to spend it.

But this forgetfulness can always be put right ; it only needs an annual dose of solitude. One needs a drug if one is to maintain, year in year out, the sweat and strain of city life. The commonest of all drugs for this purpose is the delusion that oneself, together with one's work, is of immense and absolute importance. So far, so good ; let us be addicts for eleven months a year. But in the twelfth it is essential that the drug be counteracted. To spend a holiday in some seaside resort provides no counteraction,

but, on the contrary, the waiters and entertainers, servants of every kind, musicians who play as though one were a mediæval monarch, and above all, the glittering, expensive public rooms, persuade one anew (although one shares them with some thousand others) that one must be a man of consequence. But if it is spent alone, this annual leave, in country unsubdued and free of men, the importance of oneself, one's work, and indeed of the whole of human-kind, is exaggerated in the opposite degree, diminished to the point of vanishing ; and thus a nice balance may be struck.

I would not like to have it thought that I claim a special virtue for this habit of sitting alone on hills ; it is only a prescription for a medicine which I hereby offer to anyone who needs it ; and as with other medicines, sold in bottles, ' no proprietary rights are claimed ' ; I do not suppose I am the first inventor of the tonic. But each man must be his own inventor in a matter of this kind ; for though the crude mechanism, or the properties which bring detachment from the working world, are much the same for many different people, the aim with which they use them depends on their beliefs and character. Thus I, as I have said, seek solitude because I think it gives a sense of values which, in its turn, prevents exasperation with a city life, and provides defence against insecurity and worry ; and being no less vain than other people, I recommend my panacea to them. But others seek it as a part of their religion ; others again when they are crossed in love. Some in disgust at their ill-treatment by the world turn permanently into hermits, and some become outlaws because it suits them to remain alone until some crime they are accused of is forgotten. Poets and artists seek solitude to wait for inspiration ; and some people who think must be alone to concentrate their thoughts.

But none of these reasons for going away alone, although

they may be good ones in some cases, are reasons for me or for the general run of those who work in cities. Our reason is a less direct one ; but it is very widely known, if only as an inarticulate desire. In fact, a periodic urge to 'get away from it all' is universal in my class, and business men who express the urge in that simple and well-worn form of words are figures of fun in literary circles.

That is not fair, because a man who by luck is gifted as a writer can pursue his trade whenever and wherever he may wish ; whereas a civil servant's or a business man's restrictions, in the course of time, wrap up his mind in a sort of cocoon of social and habitual ties from which escape is really difficult. His only fault is in the early stage of his career, in having permitted his cocoon to grow ; but nobody who is a writer by profession, and has therefore run no risk of being himself enveloped, can understand how gently and insidiously the skein of ties begins to form, how, aided by the necessary drug, the illusion or pretence of self-importance, it grows all undetected, until with a sudden shock the man of business finds he can no longer get away, he is imprisoned by circumstance and even by his inclination too, since tastes, however fundamental, may in the end become conditioned and debased by habit.

Such an unfortunate man is victim of a malady for which I know no cure. As such, he is an object for pity, not derision. He has allowed the worry of earning money to get too tight a hold on him for my medicine to do him any good ; he can only wish to 'get away from it all,' knowing it is not possible ; for when he has reached that state, business affairs become a part of him, a parasite upon the character ; and he will die essentially a business man.

There then is the disease, and there my remedy. The cure, in my case, works in a twofold way, first in the

memories and second in the leisure which a few weeks alone in hills provide. The importance of my work, as I have said, seems little when I view it from the hills ; even less, if that is possible, than it can really be. And the recollection of this fact is stored in some pigeon-hole of memory, where it lies dormant through the long winter in the city, but ready at any moment to be called in self-defence against excessive worry. How nice it is to sit in a committee and argue some point on which, it seems, my very life depends ; and then when that familiar surge of anger or exasperation starts, and makes me see my colleagues, no doubt wrongly, as stupid and intolerable clods, to remember for a second some high hill, or the contour of a rock, or distant seas ; and to remember also that when I saw these things I saw myself as stupid for mistaking affairs of business for reality. Such recollections give earning money the status of a game, which, I submit, is all the status it should have if the worker is to keep his peace of mind. It is easy to pursue a game with interest and energy and even passion—witness Cup Final crowds and cricket fans ; and yet the most enthusiastic player knows all the time that no game really matters in the least, and that to lose one is not a real disaster. But wherein does business differ from a game ? The penalties for failure are more harsh, it is true ; but the rules are no less arbitrary, and the heavy stakes need only add to the enjoyment and excitement. Thus, at any rate, does my opinion run when memories come back, incongruous and cheering, to my mind in offices and streets and undergrounds ; exaggerated business-like solemnity, and the earnest mock-religious air of city work seem like the stage conventions of an over-acted play ; and after these momentary visions of my work as a piece of amusing make-believe I find I can return to play my part with a lighter heart and interest renewed.

And then the leisure of these solitary days. Their elusive spirit of release and peacefulness is hard to confine in the narrow web of words. But to consider its opposite, the trains of thought which fill an ordinary day, may bring it by implication to the mind, as the inverse shape of a mould may convey to the eye the outline of the casting. For in ordinary life we drive our minds as slaves are driven ; we force them to think against time, to turn out quick decisions, to calculate, to learn, to be amused, all at the topmost speed and greatest intensity. There is no rest, from getting up to bed-time ; always, above all, we must ' make up our minds.'

That is all very well ; it is good for the mind to have exercise, and straightforward thinking never does any harm ; and I am not fit to preach patience with indecision. But thinking will not be straightforward if the mind is ' forced,' as a singer is said to ' force ' a note. And in problems of importance we do mistrust the ' forced ' thinking on which our less important actions nowadays are based ; we say, when we are faced with such a problem, ' I would like to think it over later ' or ' I must sleep on that.' But do we think it over ? Very often we do not. Yet the next morning the problem seems much clearer ; we find, for better or for worse, an answer ready-made inside our head, constructed unconsciously, as if by a machine.

For myself, I find this automatic process (for which I am sure there is a scientific name) enormously enhanced by solitude. When I am asked what I ' do with myself ' when I have been away alone, I can answer with reasonable truth that I do nothing ; and were someone to enquire further of what I thought, the answer, so far as I remember, would be that I do not think coherently at all. To look back at those times is to remember a few discomforts, little adventures, and laughter at my own expense ; but between these

rare events, there is as it were a cloud of happiness, contentment, quietude, in which no action and no thought appears, to emphasise the minutes, hours and days as they have passed ; and though I remember the hills which I have seen, my image of them is impersonal ; I picture the hills themselves, but not my own figure walking on them ; I see them as they are now, unseen by any human creature, and not as they were when my own invading presence changed them a little, and made them for a time unnatural.

It takes me several days among the hills to find this peace of mind ; but after that the only times when I recall and think about my work are when some trouble or some problem which had seemed insoluble presents itself to consciousness ; but in a new form, a trouble no longer, or a problem solved.

Now, as I have praised this cure for worry, I must add this single warning : half-measures will not do. The best of friends, by his physical presence on such an expedition to the hills, would bring a responsibility and a link with city life, which would destroy the virtue of solitude ; and though I say it without knowledge, I suppose a wife would be a similar encumbrance. Sometimes a peasant, a foreign one for choice, who has no common ground on which to drag me back from my day-dream to my waking world, will even help to emphasise the day-dream ; but on the whole I find most satisfaction in climbing a mountain so remote that I am sure to meet no man who might disturb the dreamy mental healing.

I know some people might not like this, or might be frightened to find themselves without company ; like a lady whom I overheard to say, when she was leaving Sark after a day's excursion, that it was too blinking lonely, and that a couple of days there would give her the blues. And



many people say that it is dangerous to walk about the hills alone. But the danger does not seem so serious when one is actually inviting it. Certainly, as I am not brave, I have been frightened in the hills ; once, for example, when I slept with a clasp-knife in my hand, expecting to be attacked by wolves ; again when I woke up in the darkness, high up in the Alps, to see a huge black creature standing astride my legs ; and once or twice, for that second while reason lags behind emotion, by storms or by thinking I was lost. But either the wolves were tame, or I had imagined them ; the Alpine monster was a cow, and in the morning I made friends with it and milked it ; and even in storms there cannot be hostility. And back at home I reason, with false heroism, that I would prefer to die among the hills without formality, than to be blown up in a trench, or run over by a car, and taken, in a dusty commercial hearse, to a hallowed, municipal, suburban grave.

And so, for myself, I never tire of sitting on a hill and doing nothing. Time in the cities hurries by, and we fill each minute with our hurrying ; nerves are in tension, and tempers strained. But in hills time has no shorter unit than the day, which is brief in experience, and in recollection long and serene. And indeed in my favourite northern hills there is no day, and only the seasons remain to measure time. There the summer is a sigh of satisfaction, and the winter a moment's waiting while eyes all seek the east to see the new rising of the sun. In that *primaeval* world there is still strength to accept the challenge of ambition ; and there, it may be, is some reward for those who do not refuse that challenge, but play out the stern uncomprehended game. Perhaps, by the buttress of a hill or in the pinewoods of some northern dale, my steps will quicken and my pulses stir, and I shall find my San Michele.

## INDIA AGAIN.

BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL HARRY LEWIN.

## III.

## DELHI—AND THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

*(This concludes the narrative of a winter's visit to India. My wife had not been in that country since she left with her father, Lord Roberts, on completion of his forty-one years' service in India, in 1893, whilst the writer last saw it in 1899 on the outbreak of the South African War.)*

Few places in the Empire can appeal so deeply to British thought as Delhi—its history reaching back to Hindu kingdoms, contemporaries of William of Normandy and his conquest of Britain, which in turn gave way before successive Mohamedan and Moghal invasions from the north-west, beginning in the twelfth century, and leaving their marks in the amazing series of palaces, tombs, forts and fortified areas scattered over some fifty square miles of country—a veritable wilderness of noble ruins and monuments lost on an undulating plain south of the new seat of Government—the Garden City which the British Raj is now completing as its contribution to the architectural history of India. North-east is the walled city of the Moghals, lying along the west bank of the River Jumna and containing in its fort and royal palace magnificent examples of oriental architecture which baffle mere words to describe.

There is food for thought and objects of interest in every direction. A winter week is all too short to appreciate

them. For the frivolous-minded there is equally ample relaxation and amusement : Polo, ' the sport of Rajahs and Sahibs,' the finest game in the world, played on grounds which reach perfection ; Pig-sticking, ' the sport of kings,' for horsemen of stout heart and adepts in the use of the spear, to be had within range of a motor-car run—the sports and pastimes of India in epitome, and at their best, all within easy reach. And, as a culmination to all of them, there is the ' Delhi week,' when all sporting India, the Princes and Sahibdom converge on Delhi to exhibit and watch each other's prowess in the Horse Show arena and on the Polo grounds. This year to these attractions has been added an agricultural show, initiated by the Viceroy under his own immediate supervision and direction. This attracted to Delhi a new range of interests—the Zemindar and Ryot—the landed gentry, farmers and farm labourers of India. They came from districts as widely separated as the Punjab and Madras. It was, in fact, the embryo ' Royal ' of India. No local affair, but a real all-India agricultural show truly representative of its agricultural industries.

Such is the setting and atmosphere of New Delhi. A city of wide parks, palaces, avenues and gardens, radiating from the magnificent Viceregal Palace known as ' The Viceroy's House,' which crowns the Raisina Hill.

Running due east from Viceroy's House and passing between the north and south blocks of the Secretariat, ' the Kingsway ' descends and runs for two miles straight towards—and is spanned by—the magnificent triumphal-arch of the All-India War memorial. It is a fine processional route, flanked on either side by spacious park-like lawns, and long narrow channels of ornamental water running parallel to the road. Beyond the wide belts of park are the palaces built by the Princes as their Delhi seats, and the residences

of the members of Council. These all stand in their own grounds and give an impression of restrained dignity, combined with spaciousness.

Spreading to the east of this wide area of parks and palaces is the business quarter of New Delhi, laid out with due regard to beauty as well as commercial utility—while on the west side are the bungalows of the civil population and Government officials, each a delightful type of dwelling, ranging from houses of considerable size and importance inhabited by the senior personalities, down to the smaller and more homely family bungalows, standing in their own gardens, and giving on to broad roads with wide grass verges, planted on each side with avenues of trees, which afford a charming shady and sylvan effect to the whole locality.

It is interesting to note from the plan of New Delhi how new is the idea of popular Government in India, for among all the public buildings—the Secretariats, the Imperial Record Office, the Ethnological museum, the Club—the only one which fails to fulfil a definite object in the general lay-out is the Legislative Rotunda. This magnificent building, containing all the Parliamentary Chambers and offices, the Chamber of Princes, the Council and Legislative Assembly Chambers, has, by its position, the appearance of an after-thought fitted into an open space close to the Secretariat, where it stands in solitary splendour which bears no relationship to the general plan of New Delhi. It forms, in fact, visible tribute to the adaptability of the British mind to a change of circumstance. The inception and plan of New Delhi was a pre-war thought. Then came the Great War which held all things throughout the world in fee to the future. New Delhi, in common with the rest, had to stand still and await the upshot of that upheaval, the course of which showed that some form of democratic government

for the people of India was inevitable. By this time the lay-out of the new city had proceeded so far that it was impossible to find a suitable geometrical position for any building which could adequately do justice to the conception of a new legislature for a Continent which had never before known other than autocratic rule. The Parliamentary Rotunda was placed arbitrarily therefore in a prominent position close to Viceroy's House and the Secretariat. In design it is entirely different from the other buildings, its large circular form and noble proportion, girdled by pillars, marking it uniquely in the range of the architecture of Delhi.

The lofty copper-domed Viceroy's house, flanked by the two separate secretariat blocks, are magnificent examples of the genius of British architecture of the present day. The former was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, while the Secretariat buildings are the work of Sir Herbert Baker, who was responsible for the Government buildings at Pretoria, of which they are reminiscent.

For those who are privileged to view the gardens of the Viceroy's house it is a joy to see how modern horticulture has adapted itself to the ancient forms of Hindu and Moslem gardens. The circular Moghal garden is a wonder of colour, rising tier upon tier from a clear pool of water.

Those responsible for the design of New Delhi have shown nice perception and regard for the ancient monuments and tombs which are scattered over the area upon which the New City has been built. Each ancient monument is cleverly embodied into its modern surroundings. Where it was desired to create a lawn, a garden, or formal ornamental water, the ancient ruin or tomb already on the spot has been made the dominating feature of the new 'lay-out.'

A charming example of this is to be seen in the tombs of the ancient Lodi dynasty, which, under the instigation of Lady Willingdon, are surrounded by park-like gardens, through which it is possible to wander from tomb to tomb—the ancient glories of the domed architecture being seen to advantage amidst the trees and broad walks which surround them.

The one possible exception which might be raised to the planning of New Delhi is the position of the Horse Show ground. This, a large modern red-brick arena, built across the line of the Kingsway—terminating it in fact, at the opposite end to the Viceroy's House—forms a partial screen to the walls, and hides entirely the graceful arched gateways of the Purana Qila, the magnificent fortress palace built by Sher Shah. From an æsthetic point of view the site of the arena certainly appears unhappily chosen, and one can only hope for a second Lord Curzon who will some day sweep it from its present position and re-erect it at a spot where it can give equal enjoyment to the present—without offending the past. Be this as it may, the general regard for the ancient, while creating the new, cannot but impress the visitor to Delhi, and one hopes makes clear the ideal of the British rule in India.

In sharp contrast to the spacious orderliness of New Delhi is the city and fort of the Moghal Emperor Shah Jahan, lying along the banks of the Jumna some two miles to the north-east of the Viceroy's House. A bastioned fortified wall and ditch of red sandstone surrounds the north, west and south sides of the city, the east side being closed by the river, which is overlooked by the fort, containing within its perimeter the Palace of the Emperors.

The streets of the town are narrow—winding and confused beyond words. Even the famous Chandni Chauk,

renowned throughout the East as the richest street in the world, is narrow in comparison with the boulevards of New Delhi, and, if rich in wealth, certainly wastes nothing of its opulence on external show. The whole town is essentially oriental, its main gem being the Royal Palace lying within the walls of the fort—one of the most perfect specimens of Moghal architecture and taste. Built in the days when the Jumna flowed close under its walls, all the private apartments and the harim quarters overlook the river, while the public offices and Hall of Public Audience—the Diwan-i-am—lie behind, guarded by the main entrance—the Lahore gate. It is useless to attempt to describe the innumerable treasures of beauty contained in the many buildings which lie, not as one building, but as detached entities within the walled garden of the Palace, and which, thanks to the forethought and wisdom of Lord Curzon, are maintained—as are now nearly all the monuments of historical interest throughout India—in cleanliness and order, under the charge of the Public Works Department. The name of Lord Curzon is rightly venerated throughout India, but this instance of his statesmanlike outlook presents itself continually to the visitor as well as the inhabitant of India, and is likely to be remembered by many who otherwise are not familiar with his more weighty achievements. The care bestowed upon the Palace gardens and buildings most certainly enables the visitor to appreciate the enthusiasm of the Persian couplet which adorns the arch of the Diwan-i-Khas—the hall of Private Audience—which proclaims ecstatically in Persian script :

*If there is a Paradise on Earth  
It is this ! It is this ! It is this !*

As we leave the Palace to retrace our steps through the

fort to the outer world we pass a courtyard adjacent to the main wall of the fort, and obtain a glimpse of a stone staircase running up the interior of the wall to a gallery of rooms opening out over the courtyard. It was on these that the Chaplain of Delhi with his daughter and a girl friend visitor, who had taken refuge in the fort under the presumed protection of the Moghal Emperor, were foully butchered by his soldiery on the outbreak of the Mutiny in 1857.

Another prominent building within the city is the Juma-Masjid, built by Shah Jahan, the builder of the Taj at Agra, and one of the largest mosques in India. Standing on a lofty platform of steps which approach its magnificent courtyard, high above the surrounding ground, and built in red sandstone and white marble, picked out with black marble lines, it forms a central feature of the city which it dominates. The genius that built the Taj is lacking, but its bold design, spacious courtyards and commanding position, cannot fail to impress.

A pleasing incident was witnessed here one Sunday afternoon. The courtyard was filled with soldiers, both British and Indian, sight-seeing in Delhi from a camp of exercise a few miles to the north. As the various groups moved about viewing the different features of interest, the call of the Muezzin to evening prayer was heard above from one of the minarets. Immediately the Mohamedan troopers ranged themselves in rows alongside their fellow-worshippers, while the Kadi led the prayers in front. The British soldiers at the same time withdrew quietly behind the rows of prostrate worshippers, and stood silently to attention, waiting until the service should be over. It was a graceful tribute to the religious convictions of their comrades in arms, and typical of the good spirit and understanding that prevails among British and Indian soldiers.



But it is not alone in the towns of Delhi, old or new, that the full charm and wonder of Delhi is to be found. If you would hope to gain a true impression of its real significance—its influence in the past, its possible bearings on the destinies of the future—you will be wise to widen the circle of your visit, and stretch out into the historical regions which surround it. For centuries Delhi has been the hub around which the life of India has revolved, and all roads converging on it are but channels through which its history flows. You will find a legend, a story, an authenticated fact, in every mile you traverse. There is charm and wonder in your whole surroundings. The slow drifting string of antiquated bullock-carts laden with sugar-cane, making their way along the same road, and at the same pace as the transport of Timur's or Akbar's armies, seriously impede your modern speed of fifty miles an hour, but they remind you that India has invariably encountered the inrush of foreign invasions which have been her lot through æons of time with the same fatalistic imperturbability. The inextricable mingling of ancient and new—the association of the latest mechanical development with the simplest manual appliance—forms one of the most interesting features of Indian life, and affords a colourful background to each historical tale.

Should you go north and west you will find yourself passing out of the region of the Jat, the patient Hindu cultivator, into the Sikh state of Patiala. You may not be able to go so far north as the sacred town of Amritsar with its famed Golden Temple, the centre of the Sikh faith, but you will gain a good impression of the Sikhs, those fine Ironsides of the Hindu religion, landowners and yeoman farmers to whom the British rule owes so much. You can certainly visit the battlefield of Panipat, famed as the site of three

decisive battles. Here fell Kings and Emperors in seas of bloodshed, surrounded by thousands of dead. Hindu, Muslim, Mahratta, Moghal and Afghan history are all interwoven on that field of carnage and savagery. And as you return towards Delhi down the Grand Trunk road you can picture to yourself that small British Force, which on the outbreak of the Mutiny was hastily got together at Umballa under the command of Major-General Sir Henry Barnard, a force of two weak brigades, launched down the Grand Trunk road with orders 'to seize Delhi'—its despatch hastened by the ringing words of Sir John Lawrence, Governor of the Punjab. 'Reflect on the whole history of India. Where have we failed when we acted vigorously? Where have we succeeded when guided by timid counsels?'

We can picture the old General, mounted on his white Arab charger, at the head of the column as the merciless sun rises on a furnace-like May morning. They are approaching Badli-Ki-Serai, reported to be held by the enemy. And sure enough, a salvo of round shot proclaims the accuracy of their information. The chief of staff, riding beside the General, is swept away by one of them. 'The leading battalion' (H.M. 75th Foot, now 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders) 'will charge the enemy's guns.' The 75th deploy to the front, in perfect line and dressing, shoulder to shoulder. 'Fix bayonets'—'Forward.' In red tunics, white cross-belts, dressing by the right, officers in front, away they go, supported by the 1st Bengal Fusiliers (the lately disbanded 1st Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers). Now and then a lane is carved by a plunging cannon-ball through the ranks. They are quickly closed. There is no pause, and in a few minutes the cheering line dashes up the slope on top of which is mounted the enemy battery of 13 guns, and the bayonet puts an end to further resistance.

To-day a memorial to commemorate the action is being raised on the mound through the instrumentality of an English lady to whom Britons and Indians alike owe homage for her enthusiastic and scholarly researches into the history of Delhi.

We proceed a few miles farther down the road and arrive at 'The Ridge.' As we top the crest we halt for a moment by the Signal Tower, familiar to all who read the story of the Siege of Delhi. Before us, not two miles off the walls of old Delhi, 'Ludlow Castle,' in the hollow below. Away to our right along the ridge are 'The Mosque,' 'Hindu Rao's House,' 'The Sammy House,' names that have thrilled us since our earliest childhood. The ridge is not, however, the barren rocky outcrop that it was in those days. Owing to being preserved as a national monument, and planted with trees and shrubs, it has become an undulating public park, but we can still look back northwards and see 'the old Grand Trunk, a-trailing like a rifle sling behind,' and as the evening light closes in we can imagine that we see that small column of 'The Guides,' infantry marching hot-foot to join the besiegers of Delhi on the ridge, having come from Mardan in the Punjab, a distance of 580 miles in 22 days, and this in an Indian May and June! A march to be remembered for all time. Men were 'up and doing' during those days of the Mutiny, and we owe it to their resolute devotion that India is still within the Empire.

And as we make our way towards our host's hospitable and welcoming bungalow our thoughts reach forward towards the future.

What of to-morrow and the years to come? India stands to-day looking forward towards the horizon above which has risen the star of her destiny. The rule of her

people by her people. Behind lie her centuries of absolute autocracy.

The British nation has handed her the chart of democratic government by which she has herself slowly laid her course across the centuries towards the ideal of government by the people, for the people.

Can India prick off her position on the chart and navigate herself by the same means across the troubled seas of the centuries to come? Are the navigators on the bridge capable of inspiring confidence and discipline among the crew, and prevailing upon them to pull together?

Throughout India we have heard a diversity of opinions. Some of the most optimistic are expressed by Britons whose long experience of administration and affairs in India invest their views with unquestionable authority.

On the other hand many Indians, whose rank, position, education and character give them every right to speak, are profoundly sceptical—holding that it is contrary to the entire Eastern conception of Government, and that it is but foolish illusion to hope that the foreign graft of Western democratic ideas can grow upon the deep-rooted stem of immemorial Indian autocracy.

Among so wide and great diversity of views it is impossible for a winter tourist to do more than attempt to outline such facts as came within his personal knowledge.

Nearly two years have now passed since the inauguration of the New Constitution. The main corner-stone of the edifice—the Federation of the Indian States with those of British India—has yet to be accomplished. Among those who are in a position to judge there is a fair measure of guarded optimism, but judging from recent pronouncements of some of the more important Princes and their Ministers, their acceptance of the principle has not got much beyond

the stage of respectful hope, blended with aspirations expressed with terminological caution. Still, the Central Government is reported to be busily at work upon its development, and we may presume therefore that in process of time we shall see the problem duly solved.

In the meantime in the provinces the local legislative assemblies are buckling to their tasks with earnestness and industry and, so far as they have gone, have surprised even their warmest supporters by the promise of their labours.

It is true that in six out of the eleven autonomous provinces the Government is in the hands of the Congress Party, whose avowed object is frankly expressed as being complete independence of India and severance of all connection—root and branch—with the British Empire and the British Crown. In conformity with the principles of this policy, the ministers of these provinces refuse—officially—to have any dealings with the Governor, the King-Emperor's representative. They decline to call upon him in the ordinary course of social civility, and try to create the impression among the public that they ignore his existence by ostentatiously absenting themselves from any public function he may attend. They have adopted the green, white and orange flag of the Sinn Féin movement as their banner, and this may be seen flying on Government schools and public buildings at any time when they hope it will catch the eye of their Excellencies when passing in that part of the Province. At the same time on any occasion of difficulty they are more than ready to avail themselves privately of the assistance and advice—always loyally rendered to them—of all branches of the Indian Civil Service. Not only do they constantly turn to this source of help, but few days pass in which the Governors do not find themselves importuned to grant private and strictly 'unofficial' interviews to one or other of their

ministers who are seeking his advice, and the benefit of his wide experience to help them out of some dilemma into which the responsibility of office has landed them.

An amusing instance of this came recently to notice. One of the most promising planks of the Congress platform has been to inveigh against the extravagance of Government Departments removing themselves from the plains to the hills during the hot months of the summer. They have contended that since the majority of workers in India are compelled to endure the severity of hot weather in the plains, it is improper to put the country to the expense caused by the move of offices to the hills. The Britisher and his entourage of clerks and servants must share the discomfort and heat with the poor ryot and village labourer. No sooner then did Congress ministers find themselves in the saddle, than they at once passed resolutions declining to sanction the cost of the move to the hills and enjoining that in future the seat of Government should remain in the plains throughout the summer. Not long after the passing of this measure, one of the Governors received an urgent private message from his Prime Minister requesting an interview that very day. At considerable inconvenience to himself, His Excellency cancelled an appointment in order to make way for the urgent matter the Prime Minister wished to discuss with him. The Minister arrived in a state of considerable perturbation. The Governor, completely at a loss to conjecture what was the cause of his Prime Minister's obvious annoyance and uneasiness, greeted him with even more than his usual charm and friendliness. As soon as the tactful aide-de-camp who had conducted the Prime Minister to His Excellency's room had withdrawn, and the door was securely closed, the harassed Premier burst forth, 'Sir, what shall I do? I loathe the hot weather. It is altogether bad

for my health. I cannot remain in the plains during the hot months. Besides, my family and all my relations are in the hills, and they are all very angry because the Government will not come to the hills this summer. They say that they will be ruined because no one will take the houses they have to let, or buy the supplies they have laid in. They have spent much money in preparing houses for offices and dwellings for clerks. The Municipality have spent large sums on improvements to the locality in order to render it attractive to your Excellency and the Government and Ministers, and now they will get no return on their outlay on the new roads and gardens they have created. They say they did not vote at the election for me and the Congress Party in order that they should be ruined, and they will not vote any more for me unless I bring the Government to the hills and spend even more money than was spent in the time of the former Government. They are very angry, and I can do nothing, and I am not accustomed to the heat of the plains. It is most injurious to my health and my wife also says she will not remain for the summer in the plains.'

His Excellency gave sympathetic attention to the sad tale unfolded by his harassed Prime Minister. He himself had spent most of the last hot weather in the plains owing to unrest among the various political parties preceding the elections and the shortage of rainfall which claimed his attention in various districts of the Province. He would certainly have preferred to carry on his duties from the pleasant hill residence which a thoughtful bygone Government had provided for him. Being a native of the green fields and pleasant pastures of England he realised to the full how trying was hot weather in the plains of India, how exacting to the health. He most fully sympathised with the domestic and family considerations which confronted the

Prime Minister, but in view of the decision of his Government he saw no escape from the repercussions of their action. He certainly could not order the Government to move to the hills. He could only suggest to the Prime Minister that at some future date, when a new budget was under consideration, he should consult his Cabinet with a view of devising some expedient whereby the principle laid down in their resolution might in some way be amended or even reconsidered. At the moment, however, there seemed nothing else to be done than to follow the line of policy which the Government had adopted.

Despite these difficulties of office, there is undoubtedly among the politically minded of India, or at any rate that portion of them who have had the good fortune to attain to office, a sense of pleasurable self-congratulation upon their success. The sweets of office are pleasing to the palate and they feel they are basking in the sunshine of power and importance, while even those who have not been so fortunate as to acquire definite position and emolument, are living in hope of favours to come, and regard the present good fortune of political colleagues as portents of their own future elevation on the political ladder.

The new toy of 'self-Government' is undoubtedly delighting the imagination of all aspiring politicians, and there is abroad an atmosphere of truce, if not actually of peace and goodwill. How long this will last it is impossible to predict. Even now there are clouds upon the horizon, no larger perhaps than a man's hand, but still clouds, which cannot but afford food for thought to those who care to see them. Among the most imminent of these is the approaching return to roost of some of the more telling promises made to electors during the past elections. The chief of these is the inducement offered to the electors that if Congress candidates



were returned, there would be no need for further payment of land taxes to Government or rent to landlords. As soon therefore as it was known that Congress was successful at the Polls the humble ryot ceased payment of his rent to his Zemindar, who in turn finding his income thus seriously diminished, declined to meet the tax collector with even the smallest contribution, and consequently the funds of most Provincial exchequers are low, not to say verging on bankruptcy, for the ambitious schemes put forward as election pledges by Congress candidates all need money—some of them a great deal ! The governments thus harassed for lack of funds have found it necessary to have recourse to the full powers of the law in order to compel payment of taxes. Their action has created consternation among their supporters as well as the rural population, who have appealed to the only government they know—their collector or district magistrate—complaining that they have been unjustly treated. They say they had been told that when Congress should be in power, there would be no more rent or taxes to pay, and now Government is proceeding against them to make them pay. Before Heaven they are poor men and it is unjust ! The collector explains that the law of the land still remains unaltered. They must pay their debts. That the talk preceding an election in no way alters the law. Then why were they brought to the polling-booth and made to vote ? There is much disturbance in the mind of the village populations who are not well versed in the principles and practice of democratic government. They understand the government which their collector or ‘junt sahib’ administered in the past, but what is this new thing of much talk and stirring up of bad blood between Hindus and Mohamedans and no man knowing who will rule and give the order ? The Congress candidate who told us we need pay no rent

now tells us he is the Government, and yet the Government is demanding that we pay our rent or we shall lose our land. It is all very disquieting and perplexing.

The martial races are equally perplexed and doubtful as to the eventual outcome of the new political developments while the servant class, who for generations have served the British community in India, are filled with anxiety. 'Sahib,' they ask, 'is it indeed true that the English will leave India?'

The Congress Party are undoubtedly reaping a thorny harvest sown by their left-wing elements during their twenty or more years of wandering in the wilderness of opposition, and it will be interesting to watch the progress now made by their ministers who have succeeded to the sobering influences which responsibility engenders.

It is interesting to follow the course of a debate in either one of the Legislative Councils or the Legislative Assemblies. Their meetings are held in dignified and spacious halls which in most cases have been newly built and are well up to the standards of most legislative buildings in Europe. The members generally sit in the semi-circular formation usually favoured in Continental chambers, the president or speaker being accommodated in a rostrum rather than on a woolsack or chair. The form of debate and address is modelled closely on that of the House of Commons, and the procedure appears to be well understood and respected by all members. The language of debate is usually English, although a member may speak in Urdu or Hindi if he wishes. Very few if any of them attend in European dress, wisely preferring the more comfortable garments worn by the sect or class of society from which they are sprung.

The age-long difficulty of all Government in India, that of religion and caste, is never very far removed from any topic of debate, and crops up in most unexpected forms.

There is also observable in most of the questions put to Ministers the well-known Indian trait of regard for the welfare of the inquirer's family and dependants, in the obvious desire to gain for them place and preferment. It is easy to realise that in this respect the lot of the member of Council or Assembly is not an easy one, for each one of their relations and friends regard him merely as the source from which must flow unending streams of patronage and emolument. The majority of questions bear upon these two main factors. A question asked by a Hindu member, 'Is it a fact that the Government and their Muslim Ministers canvassed for Mr. Mohamed Din and used official influence in securing votes for him?' is countered by the inquiry of a Mohamedan member with, 'Will the Government be pleased to state the permanent strength of the following ministerial services of the Secretariat—

- (1) Superior Service
- (2) Subordinate Service
- (3) Stenographers

—and will they state separately the percentage of Hindus permanent in each case?'

The majority of the seventy questions put to ministers at a recent sitting in one of the Assemblies bore this unfortunate complexion of communal rivalry and mistrust, while the remainder seemed to indicate that the motive behind them was derived from the failure on the part of the Government to appoint the nominee of the questioner to some specific post. An inquirer asked, 'Will the Government inform the House if the post of the Superintendent of Jail was thrown open to officers of the Provincial Medical Services, one of whom was exceptionally qualified for this post, and if so, is it a fact that a gentleman from another province with lesser qualifica-

tions and not possessing a British degree was appointed ?' It was satisfactory to gather from the replies given by Ministers that apparently there was little, if any, foundation for many of the grave insinuations to which these questions gave rise. The attitude of mind, however, which harbours them cannot but be regretted. It must not be presumed, however, that the outlook of all Indian legislators is bounded by such narrow, personal, and sectarian limitations. Two instances which came under our personal notice give promise of more hopeful ideals.

Thus, quite recently, the first woman member of the Central Assembly, Mrs. Subbaroyan, in her maiden speech, speaking from the Congress benches, pleaded for increased instruction in the modern science of Defence for Indians, declaring that she and her son, who was an officer of the Indian Artillery, had never experienced racial prejudice or discrimination in the Army. An even more noble sentiment was expressed not long ago by Sir Sita Ram, President of the United Provinces Legislative Council, who at the opening of the sitting in the new building, which was completed last January at Lucknow, is reported to have spoken as follows : ' Now that we are to commence our work for the first time to-day in the new hall specially built for us, it would be in the fitness of things if we pray for a minute or two, humbly and reverently, each in his or her own seat, each according to his or her own faith, asking for soundness of judgment, independence of views, sense of responsibility and breadth of outlook, in all that we do here in the interests of the Province and the Motherland.'

In the light of present world politics, we can all join earnestly in the spirit of the dignified and moving prayer outlined by this distinguished Indian statesman.

*(Concluded.)*

*TO BE CALLED FOR.**A TRUE STORY.*

BY ROBERT M. MACDONALD.

THERE is a tract of the earth's surface still unexplored, and, strangely enough, perhaps, that land is known on the map as North Australia. Its vast area has been flown over several times and its chief features mapped from the air, but the land surface of its mysterious interior is as yet as the uncut pages of a book to the white man, and it now seems as if the yellow man were about to read the pages for him.

Up to the present North Australia has been kept intact for the white man by the Australian Commonwealth Government, but despite the desire for 'A White Australia' it cannot continue to hold the land much longer if white men will not people it. Hitherto, the mere holding of the land was comparatively a simple matter, as it was looked upon as a waste part of the world and not wanted by either white or yellow man. Now, however, it is known that North Australia is not the scorching, waterless desert it was previously thought to be, and the yellow man sees in it desirable room for his overflowing millions.

Still, the knowledge that North Australia is not a waste land is all that is officially known of the country, but that it is really a land of enormous mineral wealth is known only to the few bands of prospectors who have gone into its heart, and to roving parties of Chinese and Japanese who do not tell of their experiences.

We were a party of the first mentioned numbering six,

and, as we had already sought for gold and gems in nearly every part of the world, we were hoping to find in North Australia a new part to conquer. We had come over to North Australia from Northern Queensland by way of Cloncurry and Camowee by dint of hard riding, and at the time this narrative begins were well north of the Roper River forcing through to the coast-line. We had already knapped chips from many outcropping reefs and from some arsenical-iron formations and careful assays had shown that most carried an unusual percentage of copper, silver or molybdenite, but, knowing that our four pack-horses could not carry away enough of those metals to do much more than pay the expenses of our trip, we did not spend much time upon the tumble-down dyke-like masses from which they came and had continued riding onwards and northwards. The bush was not nearly so dense as we had been used to in New Guinea and the surface undergrowths never seriously obstructed our progress, being chiefly wild vines or a kind of wild melon creeper. At least we thought they were such, as clusters of small bitter-tasted grape-like fruit grew on one and large ball-like objects which had no taste at all grew upon the other. There were also some stinging growths which, in places, stretched from tree to tree overhead but sometimes reached from the ground to an overhanging branch, but we had had experience of those harmless-looking rope-like tendrils elsewhere and, knowing that although their stings would not be felt much on actual contact they would cause intense skin irritation for a long time afterwards when touched by water, we evaded them as much as possible.

At any rate we had reached a flowing water creek late one afternoon and had camped. After having dined that evening we lay on our blankets and smoked, and it is

doubtful if any of us gave more than a passing thought to the fact that we were pioneering in an unknown land. Suddenly Mac yawned. Evidently he was a bit restless : ' I can't say that I think much of North Australia after all, mates,' he said. ' Somehow I don't feel like as if we were riding through a new land and I remember that I sometimes had that feeling very strongly over in New Guinea.'

' And yet, Mac,' the Professor reminded, laughingly, ' New Guinea is comparatively well known now, and had not North Australia been on the earth we should have been like Alexander in one respect, according to schoolboy history.'

' Wasn't that fellow Alexander a heavy-weight champion ?' Sydney Charlie asked, turning to Wolfram Dick, who was next to me.

' You're thinkin' of the wrong man, Charlie,' Wolfram Dick answered. ' Alexander was the leader of a rag-time band or something, but he became a sort of hero because he played the flute while Roma, down in Queensland, was burning. It got mixed up in a bush-fire, I expect.'

Big Sam snorted and then said tersely that Rome was not in Queensland and that the man who watched it burning was a fiddler. Probably he would have said more had not the Professor, with serious face, explained that the Alexander in his mind was a famous king who wept bitterly when he found that there was no place left in the world to which he could go. ' Of course,' he added, ' he did not know of North Australia at the time.'

' No-o,' Sydney Charlie hesitatingly agreed. He did not care who Alexander was, but he was not strong in history and wished to hide that fact. Wolfram Dick was rather shaky in his knowledge of the written past too, but, unlike Sydney Charlie, he did not care who knew it. He had a

wonderful imagination which often bridged any gulf between real and unreal happenings, but as he was fervently loyal to his mates we did not mind his quaint peculiarities—talents, the Professor called them. He roused himself when the Professor had finished speaking and we all looked round at him.

‘What you say is true whether it is or not, Professor,’ he said, ‘but if that Alexander man didn’t get here before us you might tell us who kindled that fire over behind that tall ant-bed—’

‘A fire!’ some of us exclaimed in astonishment, and I reproved Wolfram Dick for startling us.

‘I forgot to mention it sooner, boys,’ the imaginative one went on, ignoring my words, ‘but when I was fetching water from the creek for tea I saw an old fire beside that big ant-bed you can just make out in the shadows—’

While he was still speaking all jumped up and ran over to the ant-bed he had indicated. There, sure enough, were the ashes of a former fire. We were all aware of its significance.

‘That fire must have been kindled by some aborigines,’ the Professor said in thoughtful tones.

‘Aborigines of any part of Australia never make a fire as large as that one has been,’ objected Mac. ‘Some white man must have kindled it.’ He too was very thoughtful.

‘He might be some man we know,’ I ventured.

‘Maybe we can catch up with him,’ put in Big Sam, ‘but it is a pity we can’t tell which way he went from here.’

‘We had better inquire at the Post Office if he left any letters for any men who might come after him,’ suggested Mac. ‘He wouldn’t risk leaving his correspondence where birds or ants could get it. Dig into those ashes, you fellows.’



‘Hullo, what’s this?’ cried Wolfram Dick a moment later, as some of us began probing into the cold, caked ashes with sticks. He uncovered an old baking-powder tin as he spoke and lifted it gingerly. Mac seized it from his hands and, prising the lid from its place with the blade of his pocket-knife, drew out a folded piece of paper on which some writing was faintly visible. By the aid of matchlight we could see that this writing was a sort of address which read ‘To the Finder,’ and carrying the tin and the folded message over to our own active fire, Mac unfolded the document and, after showing it to the Professor and seeing that all were around him, read aloud its contents. They were words which none of us ever can forget, being :

‘I leave this in the Bushman’s Post Office in the hope that any white man who finds it will come and be my mate. I am on to a good thing but can’t work it alone. Come and help me and bring tobacco and anything you have in the eating line with you. My camp is about two hundred yards up the creek from here and can be seen through the trees if you happen to look in the exact direction.’

There was neither date nor signature on the letter, and we were filled with awe as its full meaning burst upon us. It meant that a man was camped up the creek and needed our help. Evidently he had run across some rich mineral formation which was too big for him to work alone, and he was inviting us to share it with him. The Professor was the first to speak : ‘Come on, boys,’ he said. ‘We won’t need our horses—’

‘And when we rouse him from his sleep he’ll find that his letter has brought him six mates instead of one,’ yelled Wolfram Dick in delight. ‘Maybe he’s a good cook, too, and can show me lots of things in that line I don’t know.’

Most likely all said something or other, but I didn’t pay

any attention to what was said, having already seized my rifle and the remnant of the scrub turkey we had had for supper and was running up the creek. I was followed by the others who had each picked up something they thought might be useful to our new mate. Travelling on foot through the North Australian bush at night was not an easy matter, but luckily a waning moon gave us some light and in single file we made progress, somehow, soaking with perspiration and the blood disgorged from squashed mosquitoes which were feasting upon our skins. It must have been the breeding season of snakes too, for those reptiles wouldn't get out of our way and I was continually squelching them underfoot, and the 'Happy Families' (birds which always keep together and apparently never fly except from an overhanging tree branch to the ground or from the ground back again to the tree branch) voiced indignation overhead, harshly.

But it was a short journey after all and presently Mac's voice bellowed out: 'I see the tent.' Raising my eyes, as presumably did all, I saw the tent too. Yes, it was the tent all right and in the slight breeze which had arisen we could see some torn patches of its canvas flapping. Shouting to announce our presence, in case the man might think he was being rushed by savage natives and shoot at us, we hastened forward to greet him.

'He must be a sound sleeper,' grunted Big Sam as we reached the dilapidated but closed doorway. 'We made enough noise to waken the dead.'

'Show a leg, old man!' cried Mac. 'Your new mates have arrived.'

'Hullo inside!' called the Professor. 'We are friends. We got your letter——' He paused suddenly and untying the door-strings stepped inside and lit a match. We heard

a startled exclamation and then the Professor stepped outside again. 'Yes, he is a sound sleeper,' he said. 'Perhaps you all had better go inside.'

I thought he spoke in strange tones, but next moment we were all inside the tent and even before someone lit a match I guessed what those tones meant. And I had guessed correctly. The man was certainly a sound sleeper—if a skeleton could be called a man. He lay on a slightly raised bunk roughly constructed of two saplings and two old potato sacks.

'Oh Lor'!' Wolfram Dick gasped. 'The darned crows have got in through that hole in the roof and picked his bones clean. I reckon we've got here too late!'

We others were silent. We were gazing upon the crow and ant-cleaned bones of a man who had ventured into North Australia before us and—well—we thought a lot!

Sydney Charlie found the remains of an ant-eaten candle stuck in an empty bottle on the floor, and when he had managed to get it into spluttering flame we saw that the skeleton before us was that of a small man. We also saw that a faded calendar issued by a big Sydney firm was hanging on a nail in the tent ridge pole and I vaguely noted that it was for the year 1908. A cheap lithograph picture of Fujiyama, the famous mountain of Japan, was pasted on the calendar's reverse side, and a saddle with stirrups attached lay on the ground just inside the tent door. Nothing else was inside the tent, not even the man's clothes, for the garments had been eaten by ants long ago. I noticed that Mac looked at the saddle with a puzzled expression on his face, but, as I could not see anything unusual about the saddle, I dismissed the matter from my mind. The Professor was speaking.

'That man was here while the oldest among us was in

the cradle,' he said sadly. 'Gentlemen, we are *not* explorers. Our ancestors were even here before us and we are fit only to carry on work that has already been started. At sunrise we'll look around for the "good thing" mentioned in the letter. It couldn't run away when its finder ceased to trouble about it.'

'What about the man's heirs?' asked Big Sam, as we trailed out of the tent.

'If we can find out who they are and where they are we'll give them half of what we get,' the Professor answered. 'Meanwhile, we can do nothing here.'

Realising that the Professor had put into words what each would have said in his own way, we made tracks slowly back to our own camp again, and there, reclining on our blankets, we smoked and talked until sunrise. Soon after breakfast we were back once more at the tent, but there was nothing there more understandable than it had been during the night, and we turned our attention to what was outside. An old shaft, now filled with soakage water, and some old kerosene tins that had evidently been used for carrying water and some lengths of rotten rope which lay around were the nearest objects, but just beyond the shaft a tumbledown dyke-like reef of white quartz stretched away on both sides until the bush vegetation hid it from view. On closer examination we could see that that reef carried molybdenite and had already been worked extensively by many men, for traces of the silver-grey flakes of that mineral still remained where they had been broken out from the reef; but where the extracted material had been taken we could not imagine. We knew that molybdenite was worth about £500 a ton in civilised places, but it had to be taken there before it was worth anything.

'That fellow in the tent there must have had the "mulga"

(a form of bush madness) when he wrote about a "good thing," Sydney Charlie commented when we had inspected the reef. 'Any man or men could do well here by breaking out the darned molybdenite (silver-grey flakes not unlike half-crown pieces which fall from the quartz when it is shattered) with a hammer, but where could it be sold?'

'That's what's puzzling me, Charlie,' said the Professor. 'Of course, it could be taken away on pack-horses, but that method of transport would be slow and uncertain. At any rate we didn't come here to take up teamster work so we had better move on and look for something else.'

We all agreed that the place offered little inducement to us, although it contained great mineral wealth, and resumed our journey northwards that same afternoon. On the second day after leaving the lone tent we were riding through an exceptionally dense belt of scrub when we became conscious that a faint subtle odour was in the air, but, concluding that some noxious bush growth which we did not see was responsible, we rode on unheeding and soon burst upon a native camp. We were greatly surprised, but the inhabitants seemed to be even more surprised than we were and disappeared into caves in lime-bluffs which now formed a feature of the country. We made some attempts to show that we were not dangerous by calling out and making demonstrations calculated to convince them of our friendly nature, but they made no response. Suddenly Mac sniffed the air as if he had just only become aware of the odour permeating it and gripped his rifle threateningly, and, in reply to my surprised glance, said: 'That is opium we are smelling. Those hidden people are not aborigines, but Chinese pretending to be. Ride on and look as if you didn't know——'

'Surely we are not going to run from Chinks?' expostulated Sydney Charlie. 'Why are they here, anyhow?'

'Doubtless they are mining something or other, and, their presence in this land being illegal, don't want us to know of it,' said the Professor. 'Yes, they are Chinamen all right; I saw one just now.'

'If we are going to have a fight,' Mac grunted, 'we may as well have it in a place where we'll have more chances. Ride on slowly.'

And without further discussion we *did* ride on. We had heard of Chinese gangs before and had no desire to take more risk than we could help.

But we never saw the disguised Chinamen again, and about a week later we ran into another camp of aborigines. They did not try to hide themselves, but swarmed around us inquisitively, and none of us endeavoured to draw our weapons. We did not need. There was no disguise about this lot. They were the real Australian natives and as simple-minded as children. We spoke to them in a dialect common among Queensland natives and made the usual signs of friendliness, but it was easily evident that our gestures were more eloquent than our speech, and presently the 'Kaditcha man' (witch-doctor or magic-man) of the tribe pushed forward to our sides and said interrogatively: 'Why whitefellows no' talky talky allesame other whitefellows?'

'Because we are trying to talky talky in *your* lingo, old man,' Big Sam replied, as we dismounted; 'here, have some tobacco.'

The man uttered a cry of delight and grabbed at the proffered tobacco, but didn't seem to know what to do with it until I handed him an old pipe which I had meant to throw away. He then filled the bowl with the teased

weed and, lighting it with a glowing log from a fire near, strutted up and down, puffing vigorously.

‘How does it come that you can smoke like white men and savvy their lingo?’ Mac asked curiously. ‘You can’t see many white men up here.’

‘Oh, I alonga plenty whitefello’ longatime ago. I no’ always Kaditcha man among this lot o’ blackfello’s.’

I thought that the strange-looking Kaditcha man was inclined to be boastful and didn’t see any reason why he should think it necessary to tell us that he had not always been the Kaditcha man of the tribe. He was an old man and unusually tall for an aboriginal. He was very hairy and his naked body was smeared with some kind of red and white paint, and, oddly, to me, he wore a bark imitation of a hat upon his head instead of a feathered head-dress. That hat, however, protected his head from the sun, and, while I doubted if an aboriginal had anything in his head liable to be affected by the sun, I somehow concluded that that Kaditcha man had.

‘Can you ride?’ Mac suddenly asked, interrupting a speech in the native language which the Kaditcha man was delivering to the other blacks.

‘Maybe I *can do*, boss,’ came the answer, as the Kaditcha man paused in front of Mac and for a moment refrained from puffing at his pipe.

‘You might climb into my saddle and let us see.’ We were somewhat surprised at Mac’s request. His horse was a bit of an ‘outlaw’ and would almost certainly resent an aboriginal being upon its back—or any white man but Mac himself.

But the Kaditcha man didn’t seem to have any fear of the result, and, with pipe still in his mouth, he placed one bare foot in the stirrup-iron and vaulted into the saddle.

The horse instantly bucked and performed all the tricks of its youth and the aborigines around yelled with merriment at its antics. They, with us, expected to see the Kaditcha man thrown violently to the ground. He was not, however, and when the horse, recognising that it was mastered, became still he remarked to Mac, 'The stirrups are too short for me. I get a bit sore on my sit-down place if I ride much.'

'I forgot that you were naked,' Mac grinned, unbuckling the stirrup-straps and lengthening their stretch to suit the black rider's reach of leg. 'There. How's that? Show us what you can do.'

And for the next ten minutes the Kaditcha man *did* show us, and probably for the first time in their lives the aborigines saw a black man galloping round the camp like a white man. They expressed that wonderment with shouts which, I have no doubt, were encouraging, and after a display of horsemanship the Kaditcha man trotted back to us. We complimented the rider and then, being invited by the natives to camp on a creek which flowed past their place, moved off and set about preparing our evening meal. That night we entertained the natives who came over to us with some sleight-of-hand tricks of a simple nature and gave presents of tins of jam, pickles and fish, taken from our stores, and at a moment when all attention was centred on something or other I said to Mac: 'Why did you ask that Kaditcha man to ride your horse this afternoon?'

'I wanted to see the length of his stirrup.'

'Oh!' I said, offendedly. 'I hope you saw what you wanted.'

'I did, old man,' Mac laughed, 'but don't get rusty. I really did want to know that fellow's reach of leg and I'll tell you why to-morrow.'

Soon afterwards the natives left us alone for the night



and we slept as best we could until sunrise, and by that time both Mac and I had forgotten that there was anything to be told. After breakfast most of us went out with the natives to see some mineral formations which they thought very wonderful. Perhaps they were, but I didn't see them, having stayed in camp. Mac remained behind also. He had seen that the Kaditcha man had not gone with the others, and, after our comrades had left, both Mac and I sought him out in the native shelters. That man was unfeignedly glad to see us and the three of us were soon seated on the ground puffing smoke like locomotives and airing our views on everything in general.

During the conversation Mac led the strange being on to talk of himself and, after some inducement in the shape of more tobacco, he told us that he had once been engaged with other blackfellows in breaking out a white metal from rocks. 'We couldn't do anything with it, of course,' he said, in effect, 'because the place was too far from anywhere, but we had the idea that some day we would cut a track to the coast and that until that was done we could just store our stuff. But one day a lot of Nippon men (Japanese) came into the country and saw what we were doing. They were bad men and we knew they meant to steal what we had gathered, so one day we carried it all away from where we were working and hid it down a shaft. When the Nippon men found out that we had hidden the white metal they became very angry and killed a lot of us, but I got away and then "devil-devil of the air" (a plague of some kind) catch me and when I shake devil-devil off I am among strange blackfellows an' byamby am made their Kaditcha man.'

'Did you ever go back?' I asked, interestedly, when the old man stopped.

'I no' 'member, but devil-devil inside me sometimes tell me that when I hear that Nippon men am all catch by devil-devil of the air I go back one ni' an' kill Nippon men Chief when he is sleepin'' . . .

We retold the Kaditcha man's story to our companions that night, but they were tired and not greatly interested. 'That Kaditcha fellow is a mighty good talker for an aboriginal and he can ride better than a good many white men,' Wolfram Dick commented, 'but I'll bet he didn't always wear that bark hat before the devil-devil got him.'

'You mean, Dick, I suppose, that that hat keeps out the sun and that it is only since he got a touch of it that he began wearing the hat instead of the usual gear of a Kaditcha man,' the Professor observed, yawning.

'Niggers don't need any protection from the sun at any time,' put in Big Sam. 'All the same I'd say that our Kaditcha friend got to savvy the use of a hat somewhere.'

'That's what I meant to say, Professor,' Wolfram Dick said, 'but I've forgotten a lot more of wisdom I wanted to let out. Maybe I'll dream what it was before morning.'

'Likely you will, Dick,' the Professor laughed, turning in. He knew Wolfram Dick. But next morning none of us listened to Wolfram's dreams. Mac had suggested that we should turn back and the idea was not unpleasing. We had already seen all we wanted of North Australia and having now the knowledge that it had been gone over long ago by Chinese and Japanese, and by one white man, at least, we had lost a great deal of interest in it.' As a result of our discussion we said farewell to the natives, gave them all we could spare of our tinned stores and tobacco, and

turned our horses' heads southwards again that day. We made good time on the backward track and, avoiding the hidden Chinese camp, struck the country in which lay the dead man's tent one afternoon about three days later. That evening we camped beside the tent and each busied himself in his own way in trying to clear up some of the mystery surrounding it.

'Well, boys,' the Professor summed up that evening as we sat round the camp-fire and its light cast flickering shadows on the tattered remnant of the tent that stood in front of us, 'I see that that skeleton is still inside, there. I think its presence shows that human life was active around these parts a long time ago although not to-day.'

'I don't know about that,' said Big Sam with an air of subtle knowledge. 'There are a lot of yellow men hidden in North Australia to-day, and more will come very soon if the white man doesn't show up a bit more than he is doing at present.'

'I fear you are right, Sam, still what could they do more than a white man, or rather, men? We know that an Oriental can live on a handful of rice a day and all that, but even that handful of rice has to be brought here—and nothing can be taken away——' (Each man's words that night are given in accordance with memory.)

'I wonder where that fellow in the tent can have hidden all the molybdenite he broke out from that reef,' Sydney Charlie broke in, prompted no doubt by the Professor's last words.

'That Kaditcha fellow said it was all thrown down a shaft,' began Mac, 'I——'

'Oh, shut up about that Kaditcha man. You've got him on the brain,' cried Big Sam, who was irritable that night. 'He was mad——'

‘Yes, he was mad all right,’ Mac agreed, ‘but he really hid his stuff as he said, and a lot of what he said of other things was true.’

‘How do you know, Mac?’ Wolfram Dick asked, ‘and, anyhow, what has what he did, or didn’t, got to do with anything we’re interested in?’

‘You’ll need to see a doctor, Mac, when we get back anywhere,’ laughed Big Sam. ‘I fancy you’ve got a touch of the sun. You’ll be telling us next that thing lying in the tent is the Kaditcha man himself——’

‘No, I won’t tell you that, Sam,’ Mac grinned. ‘But I’m fairly sure that it was he who is responsible for that man being there.’

Big Sam smiled: ‘As I said before, Mac,’ he said, ‘you’ve got a touch of the sun. You should be wearing a bark hat like that we saw on that Kaditcha man——’

‘I think *you fellows* ought to be wearing bark hats,’ Mac interrupted angrily. ‘If you protected your thinking machinery from the sun with something better than the things you are wearing you might be able to see facts that stick out a mile in front of you——’

‘What facts, Mac?’ the Professor asked, looking up and showing sudden interest. ‘Explain. With the exception of our highly imaginative friend Wolfram Dick here we are not so observant as you, you know.’

‘Well, then,’ began Mac, rapidly calming down, ‘does not that picture of the Japanese mountain, Fujiyama, suggest something to any of you, and have you not noticed that that dead man in the tent was of small stature and that the saddle also in the tent has its stirrup-lengths fixed for a man of long-reach leg?’

‘I can’t see that those facts, as you call them, mean anything, Mac. We came here in answer to the letter we

found in the ashes, and the man was dead—had been for a long time——’

‘Yes, the Kaditcha man killed him of course——’

‘What!’ yelled Big Sam, springing to his feet. ‘*Who is the man in the tent?*’

‘The Japanese leader. *The Kaditcha man is a white man and it was he who wrote that letter.* He told us that he and his niggers had hidden the white metal down a shaft. He was mad, of course, and couldn’t tell us any more, but the first thing I did when we got here to-night was to examine that old water-shaft over there, and sure enough there are tons and tons of molybdenite flakes in it, just hidden by the water——’

What Mac may have added was not heard, for we were all running over to the old water-shaft, and a few minutes work with the old tin buckets lying around, rotten ropes also near, and the aid of candles, proved that Mac had spoken the truth. The molybdenite or strange white metal was there!

I expect it is there still, for we could not take it away. When eventually we reached civilisation our story of the mad, white Kaditcha man spread over all the Australian newspapers, but we never heard of anyone who knew him. Should a track ever be cut to the Gulf of Carpentaria or anywhere else some of us may go back ‘some day.’

## *HANS ANDERSEN: AN APPRECIATION.*

BY MAUD DIVER.

HANS ANDERSEN—the Ugly Duckling. How many of his countless readers have realised the close parallel between the supposed duckling—persecuted for his unlikeness to one of the farmyard tribe—and Hans Christian Andersen? Son of a Danish cobbler and washerwoman, his education was negligible, his appearance, as he grew up, even more odd and ungainly than that of the young swan. Tall, lean and gawky, his sticks of legs ended in barge-like feet. His mop of fair hair and aggressively prominent nose made the small grey eyes look like pin-holes in his head. Yet those eyes observed what many others missed, and behind the capacious forehead lived the responsive imaginative mind of a true poet; a swan among ducklings, no more recognisable than the bewildered cygnet in the tale. And even as the despised creature felt a vague affinity with the lordly white swans who flew above him, so did the young Andersen feel an affinity with the famous men whose lives he devoured, as soon as he could read. Nervously distrustful of himself, hyper-sensitive to the opinion of others, he could yet, at the age of fourteen, announce that he was destined for greatness. To that end he must try his luck in Copenhagen.

He was going to be famous: that was his simple programme; but he expected no primrose path to the heights. 'First you must suffer the most awful things; and *then* you get to be famous,' he informed the devoted mother duck, who had hatched a swan's egg. Had not the old fortune-

teller prophesied a great career for him? His own little town, she declared, would one day be illuminated in his honour.

So to Copenhagen he went; and there he proceeded to suffer the most awful things, to take wrong turnings, to agonise over snubs and failures, in no strong silent fashion; for ever crushed or thwarted by his ignorance, his impossible appearance, yet for ever returning to the fray. The theatre, his first love and his last, would have none of him. The ballet school spurned his stork-like legs. Crushed but undefeated, he was at last taken on in the chorus, only to suffer fresh humiliation. Haplessly they included him in a group of naked Brahmins; and the flesh-coloured tights did so cruelly reveal his emaciated form, that he cringed with embarrassment. Worse: the Crown Princess had seen him, had said he looked like a skinned cat. Probably he wept. Tears flowed from him as naturally as his uncritical spontaneous outpouring of words.

Banished from the stage, he proceeded to write impossible romantic tragedies, ignorant as he was, and barely seventeen. Not till he was over thirty did he write the first of his fairy tales, aptly described by an Icelandic writer as 'a merry judgment day on appearance and reality, on the outer shell and the inner kernel. A double current flows through them: an ironic upper current—playing at shuttlecock with high and low; a serious under-current putting "everything in its right place" with truth and justice.'

And their satirical flavour is enhanced by fuller knowledge of the personality revealed in them: one that was less a writer to be criticised than a wayward, gifted, often absurd, yet endearing man to be loved.

Praise, love and the sunshine of fame—these three he coveted more than anything in life. But the normal Dane,

sensible and dryly affectionate, is chary of self-expression ; and even his adored Collin family, though they sincerely loved him, too often gave him stones for bread. His naïve hunger for praise they condemned as vanity ; not perceiving how the vain man instinctively shelves unfavourable criticism, while the self-distrustful magnifies it, often to his own hindrance. A Puritanical idea that praise relaxes, moved them always to tell him the truth for his own good—the unpleasant truth for choice. They begged him not to cherish fantastic illusions about his own future. Even Edward Collin, faithful friend and mentor, exclaimed—after his worst outbreak of poetic drama—‘ For God’s sake, for your honour’s sake, *stop writing.*’

Did any of them, conceivably, ever read the cry of his heart, in those floundering days, to one whose encouragement had lifted him from the dust of despair ?

‘ My nature is such that blame dulls and frightens me. Praise gives me courage and will-power. It never makes me vain. No, it makes me cling to God and fear not to be worthy ’ : a state of mind seldom realised by the average pedestrian human being.

But though friends and critics might poke fun at his absurdities, few could fail to recognise the glint of something real even in his crudest work, something irresistible in his warm-hearted, over-sensitive personality that achieved much for him in the early years of struggle.

A royal stipend enabled him to study, and pass the dread University examination. A holiday walking trip evoked a spontaneous essay of mingled observation, fantasy and feeling. Much of it was derivative, most of it formless ; but through it all gleamed the peculiar charm that was to immortalise his fairy tales.

‘ Whatever he touched he vivified ; showing for the first



time, his gift of personification. Were it fishes, death, St. Peter, cats, books—each became a convincing creature speaking for himself. There was life in it—bits of his own life—ironic packages for others and some for himself'; a description that might equally fit his fairy-tales, though the first of them was not written till fourteen years later.

As may be supposed, no publisher in 1823 would look at a fantasy, written in gay, conversational prose; but the poet-critic, Heiberg, perceiving its merit, bade him publish it himself. In order to tempt subscribers, Heiberg printed extracts in his own periodical. The first edition of five hundred was sold outright: and very soon a wary publisher was offering him a fair sum for the second edition. Critics were kind; friends impressed. The landed aristocracy invited him to their country houses. This was fame; and again he looked towards the theatre. No soaring tragedy this time. Re-reading, with amusement, his callow early efforts, he fired off a vaudeville parody of the romantic school. It was accepted and performed in the very theatre where a penniless boy of fourteen had despairingly prayed that he might become an actor. The theatre was crowded; and through the final pandemonium of applause his ears caught the incredible words, 'Long live Hans Andersen!'

He had now earned the right to live, if not the means. 'Give me a bride,' he wrote in his diary: and proceeded to fall in love with Riborg Voight, a charming girl of twenty, only to find that she was already half betrothed to an apothecary. The rôle of tempestuous lover was not for him, or he might have carried the day, she being more than half in love with him. Instead, they wept—and parted. His suffering was genuine, Riborg never quite forgotten; but his strongest inner forces were massed behind ambition: 'so the species lost to the individual.' He was to fall in

love again and yet again ; but marriage, that might have stultified his art, was not written in his stars. Failure and depression followed his first flash of success. He knew it was in him to do better things, but who would believe ? It was as if a chrysalis should tell the world that it would one day be a butterfly.

Another grant was given him for two years of travel in Europe ; and he fled from chilling Denmark as gladly as the Ugly Duckling from his farmyard.

The French were intelligent and polite. Switzerland and Italy overwhelmed him. The warm-hearted Germans admired and embraced him—as Danes, in their dread of sentiment, would never do. Out of that mental enrichment came first a deplorable poetic drama, then a novel, into which he put his own life-experience enhanced by an Italian setting : a true work of art, for which a generous publisher offered him £20, paid in instalments ! He further managed to sell a light play and a pamphlet of four tales for children, with never an inkling that he had sowed the first seed of his own immortality. One Danish writer, who saw as much, told him that the novel might make him famous, but the tales would make him immortal. To which he answered flatly, ‘ I don’t believe it.’

The novel did make him famous ; so that he promptly wrote another. But he also wrote more tales and more again, all told in a language new to literature—spoken, brief, graphic ; not talking down to children or sugaring things for them. More travel followed, and increasing appreciation. An honoured guest in beautiful manor houses, where swans floated proudly on silver lakes, he found himself looking back with amazement at the road he had travelled from Odense and his wooden shoes : ‘ a poor wild duck conjured into a manor swan.’ And out of that thought

grew the Ugly Duckling. In the Nightingale he enshrined a mingling of himself and Jenny Lind, the singer, whom he vainly loved. This is perhaps the most perfect of his stories, humour, beauty and significance woven into a seamless whole, shot through—like *The Shadow*—with satirical flicks at popular preference for the unreal. A satirist in the grain, he laughed at human beings more kindly than cruelly, because he loved them. Chasten them he must ; but in the Spirit of Puck, 'Lord ! what fools these mortals be !' Only in the 'Emperor's New Clothes' one detects the glint of a steel-tipped arrow aimed at a rival of whom a certain critic had said, 'He has several fine poetic garments, but God help him if the public ever sees him in his shirt.'

And now to his European conquests were added Holland and England, where his triumphs exceeded all that even he could desire. London he found 'a smoky tangle of shipping ; an unending wave of traffic.' London—in 1847 ! Ladies of high rank made him welcome. He met Charles Dickens, a congenial spirit : and an idyllic visit to the novelist's family completed his most successful tour.

Yet, even so, he was not happy. Like his own Little Fir Tree—most poignant and profound of his self-revealing fables—he always looked so eagerly for a finer to-morrow that he could never fully enjoy to-day—till it became too late to enjoy anything. The flaw in his English triumph was the perversity of Danish papers that persistently ignored all the glowing tributes to him in the Dutch and English press. Till his own country honoured him, even world fame could not satisfy his heart.

How that conquest also was achieved, how his own little town was illumined for him, as prophesied, should be read in the vivid 'Life' by Signe Toksvig. But, for all time, we have the essence of him revealed in these immortal tales,

that have been translated into almost every language, including Eskimo. Ostensibly written for children, the mature mind can discern the meaning hidden in the core of each like a pearl within its rough shell.

Would that he could know how far-off Japanese readers have done him reverence ; how the Indian poet-philosopher Rabindranath Tagore said once, on a visit to Denmark, ' Why do you have so many subjects in your schools ? You only need one : Andersen.'

### REMEMBER US.

*We shall pass on, with all we know,  
Into the realms of outer space  
Among thy sons of long ago ;  
And other men shall see thy face.*

*The little years we spend with thee  
In all thy gracious loveliness—  
How can we less than loyal be ?  
Or, greatly caring, love thee less ?*

*Though passed beyond the view of men,  
Beyond earth's farthest mystery—  
Remember us, O England, then,  
As we shall still remember thee !*

HERBERT J. BRANDON.

## SILESIAN SIDE-SHOW.

BY A. C. DUFFIELD.

## I.

It was a sunny afternoon in May, 1921, and the garrison sports field in Colchester was crowded to overflowing. One of those fine old Southern Irish regiments, of which the death-knell was sounded by the foundation of the Irish Free State, was holding annual sports for the first time since before the Great War. In the midst of a gay crowd of visitors the Commanding Officer and his friends were enjoying the peaceful spectacle when a dispatch rider dashed up with an urgent telegram from the War Office : 'The battalion will proceed to Upper Silesia on Sunday,' which meant in two days' time. Unruffled, and with Drake-like calm, the gallant Colonel did not interrupt the sports, and it was not until our return to barracks that the officers were assembled and told the news. At once the question arose : 'Where is Silesia, and why ?'

Someone suggested that it was in Spain ; another hotly contended that it was in Hungary. Finally a staff-college aspirant who read *The Times* daily from cover to cover announced its true location, wedged between Poland, Czechoslovakia and Germany, and told us a little of its recent history.

When the map of Europe was reconstructed by the mighty ones of Versailles in 1919, it was necessary in accordance with Woodrow Wilson's dictum of self-determination to hold plebiscites in certain areas in which the ethnographic

frontier was not clearly demarcated. One such area, Upper Silesia, was populated in almost equal proportions by Poles and Germans, and the result of the plebiscite was awaited with great anxiety in Warsaw and in Berlin, for this relatively small area contained very valuable minerals and had been Germany's second most important coal-field. With usual Teutonic thoroughness, every German possessing any qualification to record his vote was carefully shepherded into the plebiscite area, even if he had to be brought from the Rhineland, from distant Schleswig-Holstein, or from Southern Bavaria. Trains running to Breslau from all over Germany were crowded for many days with potential voters.

Allied troops were stationed in the plebiscite area to maintain order and the voting was supervised by representatives of France, Italy and Great Britain. The plebiscite resulted in a small majority voting for the retention of the area by Germany, and the Allied Forces were then withdrawn.

Officially the Polish Government accepted the decision, but popular opinion throughout Poland was incensed by the result; Upper Silesia, apart from its economic value, was desired by the Poles because it contained many thousands of Polish peasants who had been able to retain their language and their national characteristics throughout a hundred years of German domination of their beloved Gorny Slask. A great Polish patriot named Korfanty organised a large irregular army, and ill-armed though they were at the beginning of their 'putsch,' they succeeded in occupying the coveted area. Equally patriotic Germans formed a slightly less irregular force of some 50,000 soldiers who had but a few months before discarded their field-grey uniform. They attacked the Poles, and some sanguinary fighting

resulted in a stalemate with the two irregular forces attempting a war of attrition on a front of about 80 miles in the hitherto peaceful area.

After desultory fighting had continued for some months, the Allied Powers realised that something must be done to restore order and, for the first time in the history of the world, an international army of British, French and Italians was sent to stop a war between two other nations. The inter-allied force consisted of four divisions—two French, one British and one Italian. Their orders were to interpose a neutral force between the two combatant armies, gradually to clear the plebiscite area, and to maintain order until a definite decision could be made regarding its bestowal.

## II.

Two days' incessant but orderly rush enabled us to board a train at Colchester completely equipped for whatever might befall. We took our Vickers and Lewis guns—we also took our hockey-sticks and football gear; tennis-rackets protruded from valises containing camp-beds and field equipment. Was it peace, or war? Perhaps we might spend a month or two out of England, or we might be away for years. We were ready for anything.

A rapid journey brought us to Cologne, and there we rested on our oars while we were provided with additional regimental transport and stores. Our surplus goods and chattels were stored in the Rhineland city, and it was on a war basis that at last we entered a long German train *en route* for Ober Schlesien. Three days were needed to get us there, down the glorious Rhine to Frankfurt, across Thuringia and Saxony to Leipzig and on to Breslau. Whenever we approached a town of any size we were greeted by long lines of German schoolchildren waving German

flags and Union Jacks, obviously organised demonstrations of welcome to the recently hated Englishers who were now going to free part of the Fatherland from the invader. At Breslau we turned south and at last arrived in Oppeln, the capital of the disputed province. Here we detrained and were billeted in sheds and barns in a tiny village where we were able to learn something of the local situation.

It had been decided to keep the international nature of the force in as much prominence as possible and, to this end, each British unit had some French or Italian troops attached to co-operate with it. Two companies of Chasseurs Alpins, the famous 'Blue Devils,' joined our battalion, and in a huge fleet of motor-lorries we set out to stop the war. Our destination was the old country town of Rosenberg, then occupied by the Poles and being heavily attacked by the Germans. We approached it from behind the German lines, and as we got near the fighting zone the Germans ceased fire and allowed us to advance on the stricken town. Emissaries were sent forward under the white flag to notify the Poles of our intention to occupy the town, and our little force debussed and prepared, if necessary, to advance in battle order. The Poles, however, were not disposed to resist the will of the representatives of two Great Powers, and they marched out of one end of the town as we entered the other. Outposts were thrown out and the rest of the little force settled down as comfortably as possible in school-rooms and barns which a few hours before had sheltered the gallant Poles.

Similar key-points right along the line were occupied by other mixed forces and, by the end of the day, the battle-line looked rather like a diagram of an Underground railway line, the circles representing the internationally occupied



zones, and the straight lines joining them showed the areas in which fighting merrily continued. During the next two weeks mixed patrols were sent out daily to widen these zones ; the patrols did not attempt to force their way between the contending armies, but operated in each case from the rear, notifying the competent Polish or German commanders of the area from which they were to withdraw and then advancing to occupy it.

Within a few weeks the two opposing armies were separated by a neutral zone of some five miles width, and they were then given their further marching orders, the Germans to retire into Silesia proper and the Poles to withdraw behind their own frontier. Certain of the little mixed forces followed up the retreating Germans, while others, including our own, advanced in step with the Polish withdrawal.

After about a fortnight in Rosenberg we moved on some ten miles to another country town called Guttentag : the name is interesting ; is there in any other country a town bearing the equivalent title : ' Good day ' ? One company with a section of French remained behind in Rosenberg to maintain order, and every day supply lorries had to pass between the two towns and run the gauntlet of stray bullets from the irregular forces who still kept up intermittent fire. The road joining the two towns was the front line of the German force, and at short intervals it was protected by heavy machine-guns with the old stretcher-type mountings. These looked very imposing surrounded by enormous piles of empty cartridge cases, for their gun-crews blazed off belts of ammunition day and night on the slightest provocation. These machine-guns were not appreciated by our ration lorry drivers and their escorts, and it was a great relief to them when they were removed. The

cause of their withdrawal was a journey made from Rosenberg to Guttentag by a lorry equipped with special apparatus for removing undesirable guests from our brown army blankets. This weird-looking lorry was mistaken by the Germans for some new and fearsome kind of tank, and the guns were hastily removed to a zone out of reach of this threatening weapon.

From Guttentag we advanced in an easterly direction on the heels of the orderly retreating Poles. From the small village of Lubetsco the writer, then a very young subaltern, accompanied a French officer to see if the town of Lublinitz had yet been cleared. We cycled along the deserted roads, with trees on either side badly scarred by rifle and machine-gun fire, and reached Lublinitz to find it packed by a division of Polish troops waiting to entrain for their homeland. We pushed our way through masses of armed irregulars who stared at our uniforms but made no attempt to interfere with us, and at length gained the railway station, where we hoped to interview a responsible officer. The station was a seething mass of cheerful Poles, busily engaged in decorating the railway carriages with long garlands of flowers and evergreens; they were returning to their beloved Fatherland as national heroes who, without pay or recognition, had risked their lives for its greater glory.

Entrainment was proceeding rapidly under the direction of young but very efficient staff officers, and what looked like a disorderly mob gradually departed with a lot of noise but with smoothness and celerity. A Polish officer who spoke excellent French brought us in to see the Divisional Commander, and the latter told us that the town would be completely clear within three hours; and it was! I took off my hat to the good staff-work.

## III.

At length we reached the Polish frontier, marked by a deep trench which had been the old boundary mark between Germany and Imperial Russia. Four companies with French detachments were posted at intervals of from seven to ten miles, while Battalion Headquarters were luxuriously billeted in a magnificent schloss, the residence of Prince Hohenlohe, a name famous in pre-war German history. The Prince was a charming man who spoke perfect English, and he insisted on treating us as his guests ; we formed our Mess in the ancient banquetting hall, whose walls were covered with splendid heads, trophies which had fallen to the Prince's rifle. He was very proud of his armoury, containing rifles with intricate telescopic sights and 12-bores which were a delight to the eye. Some of the latter gave us some excellent sport with partridge on the domain when we later joined the Prince on his invitation for a day's shooting. This expedition was especially interesting to those of us whose experience in Ireland and in England had been limited to rough shooting. We drove out in droshkies to the venue where a line of foresters in Jäger uniform was drawn up like a guard of honour. They sprang to attention, saluted, and greeted their Prince with 'Weidsmanns heil !' the old German 'Sportman's Greeting,' and the Head Forester sounded a fanfare on his horn. Beaters were strung out through the coppices and we waited in drives for the approaching birds ; and what a bag ! Right and left, it was impossible to miss, but the 'sport' was too artificial and at the end of the battue many of us felt that much more fun is to be had from a stroll across English fields with a good spaniel and a trusty gun.

On the frontier our four companies were leading a less comfortable existence. They occupied villages at points

where roads or railways crossed the boundary, and all traffic was carefully supervised. Our Irish sentries became expert in demanding passports. 'Haben sie ihren Housewife?'—'Haben sie ihren Leg-of-mutton card?' The 'House-wife' and the 'Leg-of-mutton card' were the Ausweiss and the Legitimationskarte which all dwellers in the area carried. Our own variety of German was comparable with the 'French' spoken a year or two before by Thomas Atkins in the Great War; it was quite as effective, and was augmented by a few words of Italian, French and even Polish which our amateur linguists decided should be included in the Teutonic language.

It was necessary to maintain communication between these company posts, so we organised Mounted Infantry patrols, mounted heterogeneously on whatever steeds were available. They were a sight to inspire awe in the stoutest heart as they went clattering along the roads. First of all came an officer, mounted on the Company Charger; a sergeant proudly bestrode one of the Heavy Draught horses which normally drew the Field-Kitchen; the fellow 'hairy' bore a private with two companions astride mules from the Lewis-gun limber. A Light Draught horse from the water-cart brought up the tail of the procession, with perhaps a couple of 'G.S.' cycles added for luck. They would have been brave irregular soldiers who would have attempted to face that motley throng.

The weeks passed quickly while we guarded the frontier, occasionally carrying out a raid on some unsuspecting village where we searched the houses and barns for hidden arms. Large stores of rifles, machine-guns and grenades were collected and sent for safe-keeping to headquarters. One very big batch of stick-grenades were considered too dangerous to keep, and orders were given for them to be

destroyed. A bright lad had a brain-wave, and we spent a pleasant morning pulling the strings of the grenades and throwing them into a lake to explode in safety. At the end of the day we gathered in all the fish floating on top of the water, and enjoyed a welcome change of diet.

Weeks grew into months as we still kept on maintaining law and order and waiting for the newly constituted League of Nations to give a Solomon's judgment on the fate of Upper Silesia. A committee was appointed consisting, I think, of a Spaniard, a Brazilian and a Chinese, and these three diplomats heard evidence from the contending claimants and pondered long over their decision.

Meantime we got into touch with the regular Polish soldiery holding the frontier on their own side. Friendly games of football led to exchanges of visits, and with two brother-officers I set out on horseback one evening to dine with the officers of the frontier battalion. We found their Mess in a little cottage, and there we consumed large quantities of vodka and were lavishly regaled on excellent Polish food. The officers of the unit consisted in almost equal numbers of former Russian-Polish and German-Polish regular officers who had a year or two before been fighting against one another. They were an exceedingly friendly crowd and were very hospitable. A few days later they returned the visit, and found our whisky just as damaging to them as their vodka was to us.

#### IV.

The winter drew on and bitter cold came down on the land. A blanket of snow many feet deep covered the countryside and the temperature averaged forty degrees below freezing-point. Heavy fur caps and gloves were issued to our sentries as well as coats lined with sheep-skin.

The French went further, and a general order was proclaimed that all their sentinels were to wear *gardes-nez*, little cloth coverings to protect their noses from frost-bite.

We moved back to Oppeln and occupied a hutment camp which had formerly held Russian prisoners of war. Here we settled down into winter quarters and, except for a few detached guards at important road junctions, we lived a peaceful life confined more or less to indoor training. A large lake solidly frozen over tempted us to try our skill at ice hockey, and before long we had a team capable of remaining on their feet for several minutes at a time.

Soon after Christmas, 1921, we began to hear rumours that we should soon be returning to England, not because the Silesian Side-show was over, but for a reason much more fateful to us. The Irish Free State did not require the services of those famous regiments which for centuries had fought England's battles in every quarter of the globe. We were to be disbanded, and the grand old corps which meant more than family to us would end their glorious history.

Sadly we returned to England and with breaking hearts assisted in carrying out our own extinction. Our colours were deposited in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and Officers, N.C.O.s and men departed to the four corners of the world, some to continue in the service of His Majesty in other regiments, the remainder to return to civil life.

## OCTAVIA HILL (1838-1912).

BY MURIEL KENT.

FROM both sides of her parentage Octavia Hill inherited strong instincts of philanthropy and social reform. Her father, an energetic business man, devoted his spare time to municipal and educational affairs while living at Wisbech, where Octavia, his eighth daughter, was born on December 3rd, 1838. Her mother's father, Dr. Thomas Southwood Smith, was a noted physician who became the leading authority of his day on questions of epidemic illness, urban sanitation, child employment, and conditions of health among industrial workers. Octavia came under his influence and learned from him, thus early in her life, about the crying need for improvement that he had discovered in poor East London homes. Even in appearance, there is a remarkable likeness between the intellectual brow and intent gaze shown in her portraits, and the classically beautiful head of Dr. Southwood Smith, reproduced in the biography.<sup>1</sup>

In 1840 the Hills were compelled by financial difficulties to leave their Wisbech home, and some years later James Hill broke down completely under the strain of misfortune. Thereupon Dr. Southwood Smith came to the help of his daughter, providing a cottage at Finchley for her and the children, where they lived a happy, open-air life in country surroundings. But Mrs. Hill, who had been her husband's third wife, realised that her girls must eventually earn their living; and her own great mental and spiritual gifts were

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Octavia Hill as told in her Letters*, by C. E. Maurice. Macmillan. 1913.

used to train them for the future. They moved to London in 1851, when she was appointed manager of a co-operative association, called the Ladies' Guild, which had been formed with the support of the Christian Socialists in Russell Place.

Octavia and her elder sister Miranda were both employed in artistic work for the Guild, but they were quickly drawn into the more serious concerns of the movement and of its leaders. The first overwhelming effect on Octavia's mind of this sudden change from the freedom of life at Finchley to London streets and indoor occupation was increased by her reading at this time, which revealed to her the forces of misery and evil opposed to the aims of the Christian Socialists. But her natural courage and cheerfulness soon revived, attracting the comradeship of many of her fellow-workers ; among them, Miss Emma Cons, who was to become famous as the organiser of entertainment for the people. She drank in the teaching of F. D. Maurice at Lincoln's Inn Chapel, and became a disciple of Charles Kingsley. She made friends also with Ruskin, through carrying out some commissioned designs for him, and used to visit him at his home—always 'a very wonderful event,' for her ardent spirit was equally impressed by his wisdom, and delighted by the beauty which he unfolded to her.

It was an acknowledgment of her maturity and strength of character that Octavia, when only sixteen, was put in charge of a toy-making industry which had been started for the benefit of some Ragged School children, and was afterwards taken over by the Guild. Already she was capable of organising and directing the whole process of the handicraft ; of being responsible for the standard of production and the business details of the venture, as well as keeping order among the toy-makers. This she did without any system of fines or penalties ; setting herself to know each



girl, and her home circumstances, individually ; giving love, sympathy and moral leadership to her poor, ignorant flock, and winning affection and obedience from all.

The years spent at the Guild must have determined the course of Octavia Hill's lifework, developing in her those qualities of mind and heart which made her one of the founders of social service in the Christian tradition. From the prophets of her time she heard, and accepted, the promise of a new order based on the conviction that 'justice, truth, and self-sacrifice are the principles that hold Society together.'<sup>1</sup> Like them, she was upheld by faith that the cause of righteousness to which they were committed would prove victorious in the end.

The next stage in her preparation was reached in 1857, when the continuance of the Guild became doubtful, and Octavia consulted Ruskin as to the possibility of making a livelihood by painting. In response he gave her an order for a decorative design, of which he so much approved that he promised to train and employ her in drawing and copying for the illustrations of *Modern Painters*—work which required the highest degree of accuracy. Soon after, F. D. Maurice appointed her secretary of the classes for women held at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, which involved only two hours' attendance daily ; but was 'a most responsible position for a girl not much over seventeen.'

'Not only had Octavia to superintend the business arrangements of the classes, but also to advise the women attending as to the subjects that would be most useful to them. And she was even expected to step into the place of any teacher who happened to be absent from her class.'<sup>2</sup>

During several years Octavia went each morning to Dul-

<sup>1</sup> From a letter written by Octavia Hill in 1855. *Life*, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, p. 80.

wich, usually walking a great part of the distance, and stood at her drawing there for some hours ; then she returned for the Women's Classes, and finally walked back to the lodgings which she shared with her mother and sisters. Her energy seemed boundless, but this strenuous routine at last overtaxed her physical strength ; and in 1859 she took a brief holiday in Normandy which enabled her to go on with the beloved tasks again. After her return she attended a meeting of women interested in sanitary reform, which was addressed by Lord Shaftesbury and by Charles Kingsley, whose eloquent appeal to his hearers to save child life by influencing people of 'their own class' in the matter of housing, brought Octavia to the very conclusion reached by Florence Nightingale : 'The secret of national health is to be found in the homes of the people.'

But neither her youthful zest, nor the incessant claims of public work which pressed upon her later and almost to the last, caused Octavia Hill to forfeit the poise of her own inner life. Her early letters show extraordinary thoughtfulness and judgment, mingled with enthusiasm ; for she had, from girlhood, a deep sense of the need for that central calm in activity which was expressed by Von Hügel :

'Our ardour requires harnessing to patience, to a meek encouragement of all the smoking flax, all the broken reeds of our earthly time and comrades, for these are God's *individuals*.'

Her great interest in educational matters, and her teaching experience at the College, led in 1860 to another definite step forward in her opportunities. At the end of the year she and her sisters took a house in Nottingham Place, where they opened a girls' school on a small scale. From their new home, Octavia visited the poorer neighbours living near them in the Marylebone area, and learned more intimately

than before the sufferings and difficulties of families in overcrowded, unhealthy dwellings. A few years later, Ruskin told her of his sense of burdensome responsibility on inheriting his father's wealth; and the confidence was met by her suggestion that he should provide 'better houses for the poor.' He gladly promised to supply capital for the purchase of a tenement house, if she would undertake to find a suitable building and to manage it on his behalf.

Ruskin had come to see that Octavia's rarest gifts must be used for social ends; and before going abroad in 1863, he charged her:

'Never argue that it is not my work. I believe you have power among people, which I ought not to monopolise; . . . one way there is in which you may both grieve and vex me, namely by hurting yourself. Don't be proud and foolish; remember your strength is worth keeping. Rest for months or years, if you ought, but don't lose it.'<sup>1</sup>

It was not till the spring of 1865 that three houses, in a court close to Nottingham Place, were actually purchased. But she had been fully occupied in the interval—taking her share of teaching their pupils; drawing for the Society of Antiquaries; studying the construction of private model lodging-houses; and arranging ways of befriending the future tenants, especially the women and children. She also held a drawing-class for working women students at the College. The first housing experiment expanded steadily when Octavia Hill took over a landlord's governing duties which, as interpreted by her, ranged from dustbins to concerts. After much search, she found some freehold land, covered with old stables, to be sold together with a large house, a garden, and five cottages, in a densely crowded district near by. Ruskin bought this property, and she

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, p. 203.

proceeded to plan more dwellings ; to turn part of the stable buildings into a kind of club-room ; and to pull down a portion in order to make a playground, which was also used as a drying ground by the mothers during school hours.

She was now fairly launched on the exacting life of a house-owner who had to choose suitable tenants, and was involved in all the intricacies of ' references, notices, rents, repairs, the dry necessary matters of business (that) take up almost all time and thought.' In a letter to her sister Florence (1867), she acknowledged what a relief it would be

' to get rid of this annoying small perpetual care, if the work could be done as well ; but then it couldn't : it is only when the detail is really managed on as great principles as the whole plan, that a work becomes really good. And so, . . . I must still keep it, and hope that it will not finally make one either mean, or small and bitter.' <sup>1</sup>

From the first Ruskin had told her that he wished to receive a five per cent. interest on the capital supplied ; ' not that he cared for the money ; but that, if the scheme were placed on a business footing, others might follow the example.' That seemed to Octavia a worthy motive, and she agreed to do her utmost to fulfil his condition. Apart from her sense of stewardship for Ruskin, and for the numerous friends who gave liberally to later schemes, she had clear ideas of her own on the ethics of giving and taking, which may best be summed up in her own words. Of indiscriminate aid she says :

' It is the greediness of the recipient that is the awful result at present ; and the helpless indolence of expectant selfishness. Call the man out of himself by letting him know the joy of receiving and giving, and you may pour your gifts upon him, even lavishly, and not corrupt him. . . . But please

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, p. 229.

God one day we shall arrange to be ready with work for every man, and give him nothing if he will not work ; we cannot do the latter without the former, I believe.' <sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to compare her view with the comments of a later authority. Sir Arthur Newsholme, in his book *Fifty Years in Public Health*,<sup>2</sup> observes that 'the trend of events undoubtedly is towards further housing at public expense, a trend which cannot be regarded altogether complacently.' He adds :

'What can be done by voluntary personal work is illustrated by the admirable work of Miss Octavia Hill. . . . Her economics were rigidly mid-Victorian, and she would have been horrified by the developments of housing policy at the expense of the public which have occurred since the Great War, and which have been endorsed by all political parties. . . . She started by telling each tenant how much she could afford weekly for house-repairs and improvements, and that if anything was over, rents would be reduced. . . . And her policy and personal influence succeeded in converting an increasing number of houses into dwellings that she could be proud of.'

Perhaps it was because Octavia Hill's work owned another source of inspiration than politics of any kind that it keeps the mark of originality among numerous later and more ambitious schemes, and is still bearing fruit to-day. On moral grounds 'she always held that dwellings should be self-supporting.' But only a system built up by intellectual and spiritual genius could have availed to open up 'new methods in the management of property'—as, according to Sir Arthur Newsholme, hers did—and, at the same time, to bring her into such relations with the tenants that she wrote : 'I cannot tell you what my people are to me. We are such thorough friends.'

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Allen & Unwin. 1935.

As the years passed, that quiet, thorough system of reform attracted public attention, and Octavia Hill was asked by individuals, or housing associations, to administer other and larger properties. She trained the helpers who gathered round her as 'rent collectors'—though the title by no means covered their varied work under her guidance—and, in an ever-growing sphere, she held fast to her principle: 'Love and mercy and gentleness and humility and thoughtfulness each of us needs equally in her work.' For herself she found that the 'personal poverty' which had always been her lot was a help, keeping her 'more simple and energetic, and somehow low and humble and hardy.'

But in 1874 some wealthy friends, who felt that a leader of such capacity ought not to be under the necessity of teaching for a livelihood, privately arranged a fund to set her free from this double strain. Octavia's health had already suffered, and she therefore accepted the offer thankfully, though refusing any further help for herself. Thenceforth she could give all her time and powers to causes which called especially for those qualities that Carlyle told Ruskin he had observed in Octavia Hill:

'Of a most faithful disposition, with clear sagacity to guide it. You can't get faithful people; they're quite exceptional. I never heard of another like this one. The clear mind and perfect attention, meaning nothing but good to the people, and taking infinite care to tell them no lies.'<sup>1</sup>

It is more difficult to define her part in the Charity Organisation movement from its early days. Though in full sympathy with the Society's aim of efficient, co-ordinated help, she shrank from the 'iconoclastic zeal' shown by some of the members; and her influence was always used to keep the spirit of 'subtle human sympathy and power of human

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, p. 312.

love' alive in the counsels of the central body to which she belonged, and in the investigations made by local committees. Her reverence for other souls was never overcome by the evil she encountered; and a passage in one of her letters explains her consistent attitude towards them:

'My only notion of reform is that of living side by side with people, till all that one believes becomes livingly clear to them.'<sup>1</sup>

Among the remarkable women who were trained as her helpers by Octavia Hill, was Henrietta Rowland, afterwards Mrs. Barnett, who shared her husband's pioneer labours in the East End, and remained a champion of the poor to the end of her life. At a later date Beatrice Potter, before her marriage to Sidney Webb, worked for a time as a rent collector in one of the properties under Octavia Hill's management. Her book *My Apprenticeship*—that closely observed record of social conditions and her own approach to these matters—gives a portrait of Octavia Hill from notes made in her diary:

'She is a small woman, with large head finely set on her shoulders. The form of her head and features, and the expression of the eyes and mouth, have the attractiveness of mental power. A peculiar charm in her smile.'

They discussed artisans' dwellings, and Octavia Hill characteristically advocated action, not 'windy talk'; that men and women should go 'and work day by day among the less fortunate.' As a realist who never ceased to be an idealist, she desired, like Mrs. Barnett, 'homes, not habitations' for the tenants; and, with that in view, each of her trained workers was given the charge of a block of buildings, which included

<sup>1</sup> *Octavia Hill: Early Ideals*. Edited by Emily S. Maurice. Allen & Unwin. 1928.

'the duty of collecting, superintending cleaning, keeping accounts, advising as to repairs and improvements, and choice of tenants, and (rendering) all personal help that can be given . . . without destroying their independence, such as helping them to find work, collecting their savings, supplying them with flowers, teaching them to grow plants, arranging happy amusements for them, and in every way helping them to help themselves.'<sup>1</sup>

By 1874 she could report that fifteen blocks of buildings, containing between two and three thousand tenants, were under the care of these friendly authorities. In succeeding years properties were taken over and reconditioned in White-chapel, Westminster, Deptford, Islington, Lambeth and Notting Hill. Further houses were added in the Marylebone area ; and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners asked Octavia Hill to manage a large number of their tenements in Southwark. They also gave a plot of land for a public garden, and she turned this waste, forlorn spot into Red Cross Garden, with a covered playground for the children. Later a hall was built there for the use of tenants in the district, and cottage dwellings were grouped about it.

The housing reform movement spread to other cities ; and Octavia Hill's system was studied and adopted in America and certain European countries, thus developing in a wonderful way from her first small experiment. There was little of the social scientist in her outlook and methods ; but she applied the whole of her richly endowed nature to the purpose of sharing with disinherited folk her own deepest sources of happiness—order and beauty and the things of the Spirit.

All her work was essentially creative, though its immediate object might be the cleansing of some vile den ; or the

<sup>1</sup> *Octavia Hill's Letters on Housing, 1864 to 1911*. Extracts compiled by her niece. 1933.



gradual building up of self-respect in family life ; or onerous service on the Poor Law Commission of 1907 ;<sup>1</sup> or her efforts to secure open spaces and fresh air for her people. These led on to the larger enterprises of the National Trust ; and a tract of the English countryside she loved so well is fittingly dedicated to Octavia Hill in Surrey. But her truest memorial exists in the lives and homes of poor tenants ; and in her writings—above all, her letters to friends and fellow-workers—through the incalculable influence of a noble personality.

<sup>1</sup> Lord George Hamilton wrote in 1912 : ' I was associated with Miss Octavia Hill for five years on the Poor Law Commission. . . . She was a great woman. . . . To me she was a pillar of strength, and at moments of discussion and controversy, she would intervene, and with a few words of undeniable common sense and insight, solve the problem we were considering.' *Life*, p. 569.

## THE GOLDEN KEY.

BY ALYSE GREGORY.

*Father, O Father ! What do we here,  
 In this land of unbelief and fear ?  
 The Land of Dreams is better far  
 Above the light of the Morning Star.*

—WILLIAM BLAKE.

THERE was in all Winterwald no more dilapidated a cottage than that in which Frau Federspiel and her son had their dwelling. It was originally a well-built house solidly constructed and thickly plastered over, but it had been long abandoned by its owners and allowed to stand empty while the weathers wore away the plaster, seeped through cracked and broken window-panes, and rotted walls and floors. Suddenly one day one of the peasants of the valley had been surprised to remark as he was passing by the door smoke issuing from the chimney and the gossip began to circulate that a woman and her son had appeared out of the forest to take up their abode there. Certainly there could not have been imagined in all the world two human beings who looked more as if they had stepped out of a story of Hans Anderson than Frau Federspiel and her boy. It was as if a fairy queen had given birth to a goblin. She was small and delicately modelled with a child's skin and the innocent countenance of a child, combined with something of the born coquette. If life had inflicted injuries on her it had equally in some inexplicable way left her unscathed. Her voice was soft, her footstep light, her hair fine spun, only her hands were calloused and ingrained with dirt as if she

had used them to labour with. There was an expression of surprise and uncertainty in her face, like a child, too, who had been called suddenly from her play to witness something beyond her power of comprehension. Nikolas Federspiel, her son, might have been ten or he might have been older. He had a large, ugly, but not unprepossessing face, with eyes that regarded whatever touched his range of vision with a steady attentive gaze. His mouth remained always slightly open and his teeth were ragged at the edges. His hair stood up like a brush on his head and his eyebrows were thick and bushy. His body down to the waist was large and ungainly and he could hardly step from one room to another without tripping over something or knocking something down, and even when he was out of doors he would often stumble and fall and then pick himself ruefully up again. His mother had never once in all her life scolded him, indeed a cross word never passed between the two. Their relationship was a peculiar one, and each seemed to sense that the other was a little odd.

As the peasants got used to their presence in the valley it began to be whispered by some that Frau Federspiel had been deserted by her husband because she was queer, but others maintained that she was queer because she had been deserted by her husband. She had strange and original notions in her head and went to work to earn a living for herself and her son by collecting bones from the peasants and grinding them up into meal to sell for manure. She would take a little hand-cart and go up the steep mountain roads through all weathers and seasons and trundle the bones back to her own door. Down in the cellar she had some old machine that would give a surly grinding noise as if a kennelled dragon were kept in the old house and was devouring a carnivorous diet. In the mushroom season she

gathered mushrooms and knew each variety from the other and just where to go to find them, and when the huckleberries and cranberries showed themselves in the forest she would take baskets and spend hours out in the woods picking them to sell. Wherever she went she seemed to move in an immunity from reality. She had a sprightly daintiness half elegant, half arch. She was as different from the ordinary peasant as a humming bird is different from a crow. She seemed to belong to another universe.

The house was situated at the side of a tumbling mountain river and day and night the sound of rushing waters was ever in the ears of Frau Federspiel and her son. They inhabited only part of the house, in fact three rooms. The other rooms they never entered. Nikolas had a sleeping chamber at the top of some rickety stairs where he used to lie down on a hard wooden bed, often staying awake with the cold. He was, however, strong and cheerful and his mind was so full of fantasies that he hardly took note of whether he was waking or sleeping. He had dual sides to his nature known to no one but himself. In his ordinary activities he was practical and even shrewd. At school he learned his lessons better than all the other children. It was he who had fashioned the rude furniture he and his mother used. He had gathered together boards that he salvaged from the river, pulled out nails from old pieces of timber he had found in the fields or near lonely huts used for storing hay, pieced together this or that for a table, built up a stool, a chair, a chest of drawers, borrowing tools from the peasants and always carefully returning them each night, though he had to walk long distances to get them again the next morning. Everything he did had a particular turn that was unmistakably his own. He got from somewhere paints and painted the walls of the rooms with pictures of animals.

There was one of a snow-hen, with spreading tail, and another of a roe deer sunk deep in the snow, with three foxes killing it. He or his mother had also tacked up old-fashioned pictures in every possible empty space. Frau Federspiel slept in a place hardly bigger than an alcove next to their living-room.

Nikolas would lie in his bed at night, his mind filled with the strangest imaginings. He would often think he saw troll-like figures float through the window, figures that mocked and danced and made ceremonious bows at him. One moonlight night there was a dwarf such as the woodmen of the valley were fond of telling about, with a long beard and a humped back who entered carrying a great bag of fir-cones which unceremoniously he spilt out on the boy's luminous bed saying in a high cracked voice just audible above the surge of the river, 'It is for you, Klaus, it is for you, as soon as you have won the love of the Princess Irma from the Palace of Bergfriede.' Then presently he gathered all his forest gear up again and disappeared once more through the small square window and over the turbulent tossing waters into the steep mountain forest. To his mother Nikolas spoke only when it was necessary they should communicate with each other about something. He was accustomed to her continual murmurings, for she talked incessantly to herself, usually, he suspected, about remote happenings in her childhood. She worked with a combination of fecklessness and industry, and would often sit for long moments gazing with a soft sightless stare, till she began moving about again in the dark untidy interior as noiselessly as a mouse. Dust seemed to mean as little to her as to a spider, she was unaware of it. In the winter they lived on potatoes, bread, dried meat, and maize, and in the summer they had vegetables and salads from a little garden

which Nickolas dug and planted and tended with the utmost diligence.

As soon as the snows were melted Nickolas would hurry up into the forest, his senses aflame. All creatures loved him, bees did not sting him when he robbed their hives high up in the rocky clefts of the mountain, if he rested near a pond dragon-flies would very soon light on his felt hat. He could feed the tits from his hand, coax squirrels to jump on his shoulder, stray cats rubbed up against his legs, dogs never barked at him, and the red deer would continue to graze, never troubling to lift their antlered heads as they saw him approaching. A wild forest crow he had tamed came every day to his window to be fed.

For two summers now he had been acting as a cow-herd for three of the peasants in the valley. Towards the end of June the cows would be let out of their steaming stalls where, surrounded by snow up to the pent roofs, they had been confined all through the winter months. Nickolas was employed to drive them up on the side of the mountain where they would graze all day and in the evening be brought down again to their stalls to be milked. Throughout the long dreaming summer days he would be near them thinking his thoughts, his head overflowing with the most extravagant fantasies. He would lie for hour after hour flat on the earth breathing in the perfume of the sun-warmed pine-needles. He had a knife attached to a cord and with this he would pass the time whittling at catapults, or making bows and arrows, or shaping stout walking sticks with well-selected roots for the handles. But one of his most absorbing occupations was to build imaginary villages. He would choose certain sticks and stones and fir-cones and construct a whole little community with barns and houses and the church in the centre. One day he had a

particularly ambitious plan, he would build the castle where the Princess Irma lived. The place he chose for his work was a smooth sunny lawn half-way up the mountain. He went about in all directions to find the particular kind of sticks and stones that he wanted. The palace, little by little, was completed and appeared to him a wonderful creation, and he made a wall about it. Then he decided there must be lanterns for the Princess to find her way by, so he raised some gentian trumpets on the ends of sticks, choosing the most perfectly shaped ones for this purpose. With extreme satisfaction he at last stood up to view his handiwork when he had a feeling that he was being watched, and turning his head he met the gaze of a little girl with long corn-coloured braids and eyes as blue as the flowers he had just selected with such care. It was rare for him to see even a wood-cutter. His astonishment now could not have been greater if the heavens had opened above him and an angel had appeared. It was as if the Princess Irma herself was standing before his eyes. 'What are you making there?' the child asked in a friendly tone; but Nikolas's throat was so dry that he was unable to articulate a single word, and after a second's hesitation the little girl turned around and disappeared amongst the trees.

For several days after this incident it rained or the weather was uncertain. Nikolas would sit under a fir tree before his castle in his long herder's cape, his knees drawn up under him, his hood over his head, and his eyes scarcely ever leaving the direction from which the little girl had first made her appearance. Then when the day was finished he would go about the mountainside calling his cows, giving strange shrill cries different altogether from the usual Ho ! Ho ! of the boy herders. He knew the name and particular characteristic of each separate cow—Blüemli, Elsa, Belle,

Katha, Louise, Leni, Fida, Nina, Utti, and Lisa. From every direction the bells would sound. He would put his arms around the neck of each grey-coated beast and experience an ecstasy of pleasure in smelling its pelt and feeling its rough tongue licking the back of his hand. His imagination knew no bounds. At night he would stare up into the sky and at the sight of the stars the actuality of his days would slide away. It was no stranger matter for him to see a pigwidgeon at the end of his bed than it was that his eyes could look up at sparkling lights in midnight spaces far above the pointed tops of the larch trees and the red pines. In the winter time at night the mountains would often resound with the barking of foxes and he would leave his mother and run out of doors and stare across the river up at the dark mysterious forest and would feel to the marrow of his bones a wild exultation to hear the hoarse yelps of the hunting animals come nearer and nearer.

On the first sunny day after the little girl with the fair hair had appeared before him Nikolas drove his herd up through the forest. In the vast limitless woods he was as much at home as were the jays. The trees were as familiar to him as brothers. He always studied attentively the shape and attitude of each separate one. Sometimes several trees grew out of the same root, he had counted as many as nine together. That radiant morning with the birds singing and every leaf sparkling all sorts of inarticulate sensations stirred in his being, dim primordial intimations of possible delight. He heard pine needles whispering, the sun was his own blood, and the earth on which he trod was himself. The faintest rustling was audible to him, the scampering of a mouse, a bird preening its outstretched wings fifty yards away, or the twitching of a roe deer's ears. Wonder was everywhere about him. He was aware of a deep strong



conviction that now that the sun had come back the little maid would appear once more through the trees. He kept watch in all directions—and then at last there she was! running towards him again with arms outstretched full of eager, unembarrassed, headlong recognition. ‘Where are your cows?’ she asked when she had got back her breath. ‘I hope they aren’t lost.’ He shook his head in the negative. ‘If I come to where you were building the house the other day, will you show it to me?’ He nodded his head in agreement. That was the beginning of a singular intimacy.

Lorraine Brettaud was the name of the little girl. She was staying with her parents in a house in the mountains for the months of July and August. Her father was an architect and this was their summer holiday. No two children could have been more different in character than were she and Nikolas. She was frank and lively in conversation, self-confident, merry, and bold. He was impractical, cunning, with as many visions as there are clouds in the sky, inarticulate, modest, suspicious, and credulous, and full of a kind of unpredictable genius. Lorraine was as fascinated by Nikolas as she would have been by a great green frog in their garden pool at home. She had never seen anyone like him before. This was her first summer in the German part of Switzerland, for she lived in Geneva, but she had learned German in her school and with her governess, and her mother had taught her German songs which she sang very prettily, her high-pitched childish voice in the twilight of the early evening penetrating the pure mountain air with a quality that caused the spirit of Nikolas to shiver as he sat at her feet listening with mouth wide open. All things came easily to Lorraine. She was as spontaneous and daring as a little girl of her age could possibly be and she was admired and loved by everyone who saw her. She

had never known anything but affection and she trusted life as a duck trusts the water. The sudden isolation and wildness of the mountains was a new sensation for her. She had always been to the seaside before with her parents, but this year her mother's health was delicate and the doctor thought the mountain air would be beneficial for her. Lorraine's father was a polite and cultured man who had inherited a fortune and was a successful architect as well. Lorraine's mother was a small woman with dark expressive eyes of which the pupils grew large or contracted according to her feelings, and full curving lips that seldom smiled. She had a secret passion for poetry which she communicated to no one, hiding her real tastes away, as far as possible even from herself, and pretending many things she did not feel in order to please those about her. She loved her husband in a kind of unquestioning protective manner.

Lorraine's new interest in the mountain cow-herd was a source of surprise and anxiety both to her mother and father. It was the first really erratic thing she had ever done in her life. Hardly a day now passed that she did not at one time or other go running off in search of him. She would stand listening for the sound of the cow-bells and then call the call Nikolas had taught her and hear his answering cry and he would come clambering breathlessly up the side of the mountain and she would laugh a heart-free careless laugh at the sight of him, so eager and Caliban-like. There were stumps of trees, round and smooth, shaded by fir branches and often cushioned with moss that made wonderful seats or tables. She would bring bread and fruit and they would sit down and he would tell her the most fantastic stories, for gradually, emboldened by her irrepressible naturalness, he had begun to disclose to her those secret imaginings of his of which no one else had ever had the slightest suspicion.

He told her of the figures that danced on his bed, of the man with seven voices who called to him from out of the trees and rocks and certain mountain gullies, of the dwarf with the hump on his back and the beard. He built villages for her out of fir-cones and sticks and gave them names and peopled them with fancied inhabitants. They were an oddly assorted pair, the dancing, merry, well-bred little girl, with her long silken braids, thin legs, and dainty dresses, and the uncouth boy miraculously quickened with the ichor of a woodland deity.

Lorraine would sometimes recount his stories to her mother who would listen to them with the gravest attention. Then one day Mme Brettaud said to her daughter, 'Do you think it would be possible for me to come with you once and meet your cow-herd, Lorraine?' It was really Lorraine's father who was becoming worried about his child's intimacy with this mysterious peasant boy, and who had suggested to his wife that she go with Lorraine and talk with him. Lorraine was somewhat taken aback, for she was afraid that her mother would not like Nikolas or that Nikolas would be made nervous by her mother. But she loved her mother dearly—and anyway what could she say?

The next day Nikolas was not a little dashed to see a lady with Lorraine, but the lady was so simple and so friendly that his face soon lost its expression of sullen unresponsiveness. As for Mme Brettaud she could never have imagined any meeting to give her more pleasure. The quaint, old-world appearance of the boy in his green sun-bleached jacket with ragged sleeves and short trousers, his great boots and wide-brimmed hat with a sprig of Alpine rose in it, his long staff, his large elfish face with open mouth and wary gaze, interested and charmed her and she bent all her powers to win him, listening to everything he said with an attention

that approached respect. Lorraine had never seen her mother in such a mood.

When Mme Brettaud reached home she was able to reassure her husband. M. Brettaud trusted his wife's judgment and troubled himself no further about how Lorraine passed her days. But Mme Brettaud could not get the thought of this eldritch child of the forest out of her mind. The memory of him seemed to be like a charmed magic casement through which she had looked into another world. She was shy about interfering in any way with her daughter's pleasure in being alone with Nickolas, and yet she had an overwhelming desire to see and talk with the boy again. Finally she could contain herself no longer and said one morning in a tentative voice, 'Do you know anything about your friend's family?'

'Yes, he lives alone with his mother,' Lorraine answered. 'I don't think he ever had a father, but I don't know, but he hasn't got any brothers or sisters.'

'Perhaps, that is, it might be possible, if you think it wouldn't offend them, for us to make his mother a visit?' Lorraine clapped her hands with pleasure. It never entered her head that hers and her mother's presence could possibly be a trouble to anybody. 'Wouldn't that be amusing, Mamma,' she said. When she suggested such a possibility to Nikolas, however, he fell silent and tripping clumsily over the root of a tree, stammered out that he would ask his mother and let her know the following day. The result of the consultation was that he arranged with another boy to come and look after his cows for the afternoon two days later, and Lorraine and her mother engaged a little carriage to take them down the mountain. Mme Brettaud made no mention of where they were going to her husband, and Lorraine, used to her mother's reticences, knew that this

was one of the things that was not to be communicated to her father 'lest it trouble him.' Lorraine had on a frock as blue as her eyes and a yellow straw hat and Mme Brettaud was dressed very modestly, only she wore a strikingly beautiful old brooch of rubies and carried a light silk parasol. Lorraine had never in her life driven in a mountain carriage before. She squeezed her mother's hand in transports of pleasure. Nothing had brought them so near together for a long time. The road wound in and out among tall red firs and then came into an open road bordered on each side by hay-fields, some lying ready for their second mowing and others peopled with whole families of haymakers, from babies to grey-headed grandparents, the women and children wearing bright-coloured kerchiefs about their necks, the men, with bare arms and open shirts, their skin as brown as the logs and lintels of their mountain houses. The driver had very red cheeks, a very black moustache, a long whip which he never used, and he sat up straight on the box. The horse was glossy and well fed and lifted up each hoof very high. They decided to leave the carriage some distance from the house, so they got out and followed by the side of the river until they came to the gate where Nikolas was standing waiting for them. He had tried very hard to brush down his hair, but his efforts had been of little use. There was a large horse-shoe nailed up over the door and a black cat drowsing in the sun on top of a wood pile. Nikolas had been up half the night trying to clean the house, an activity which at first astonished his wayward mother, and ended evidently by striking her as amusing, for she had laughed and laughed, a thin silvery laugh as high pitched and musical as the note of a red-breasted bullfinch ; and then she had left him to his labour, a labour that sought to eradicate in a few hours the neglect of months.

In the end, however, Frau Federspiel had been carried along in the train of her son's enthusiasm and had got out from some unknown corner an old chest with kerchiefs and dresses in it and had put on a very wrinkled gown of some filmy material with pink childish rosettes on a white satin bodice. Her soft unruly hair was done up in a silk net. Her appearance was so changed that Nikolas did not know whether to be proud or ashamed of her. When Lorraine and her mother arrived she came forward like a great lady to meet them. Mme Brettaud was amazed. Immediately she entered the Federspiel door it was as if for the first time in her whole life she was able to escape from the environment she disliked into one exactly suited to her natural tastes. Just as Frau Federspiel looked quite different to Nikolas so Mme Brettaud looked quite different to her little daughter. The colour had come into her cheeks and her eyes were shining. She was so afraid she might do or say something tactless, but Frau Federspiel, unperturbed, motioned her to be seated with the gesture of a queen seeking to put an uncertain subject at her ease. 'Go, my child, with Nikolas. Perhaps he would like to show you the river,' Mme Brettaud said to Lorraine. 'I want to talk with Frau Federspiel.'

'Oh, let me see the window where the dwarf with the beard came in,' Lorraine whispered excitedly to the boy. He led her through a long, dark passage with a stone floor, up some stairs to a room just large enough for a chair and table and bed. There were two lanterns suspended from the ceiling. They were made of hollowed-out turnips with carvings of mountains on them and a candle in each, and on the four panellings of the door were painted in lurid colours representations of the four seasons of the year. Lorraine leaned her head out of the small open window. There was a crow standing on a rock in the centre of the

river, the waters swirling by on each side of the rock. It gave a loud cry on seeing the child's face at the window and flew away flapping its wings.

Down below Mme Brettaud was engaged in conversation with her singular hostess. 'Were you born in Winterwald?' she asked.

'I look after my son,' Frau Federspiel answered, paying no attention to her question. 'He is a good boy. Nobody wants bones. The paths are steep; all things come to an end, paths and bones. My mother loved mignonette, it used to smell so sweet. I had a dog named Fidushka and once a bull chased me. Sometimes the moon shines too strong and he who loves is lost. It is not my country. My little sister comes to me in the night. It is not bones that cost, and winter is cold and buttercups grow in May. Christ is good to those who love Him. My father said we would meet him in heaven. He was a good man and my son is a good boy. I know where to go for blueberries but sometimes the walls close me in.' Then her eye came to rest suddenly with a lingering concentration on Mme Brettaud's ruby brooch, and she rose with a darting movement and went out of the room returning with an old portfolio of parchment. She opened it and took out some packets of photographs—old letters, pressed flowers, and a brooch of antique design, a valuable black pearl in a twisted gold setting of wonderful workmanship. 'Oh, que c'est beau!' Mme Brettaud said, reverting to her native language. 'C'est pour vous,' Frau Federspiel replied, speaking French as if it was natural to her. Mme Brettaud was so overcome with embarrassment and surprise that she hardly knew what to do. She did not like to refuse the gift—and yet how could she accept it? Frau Federspiel took some faded photographs from one of the packets and handed them to Mme

Brettaud. One of them was of two little girls with fur caps and white fur collars and cuffs standing by a sleigh, in which a handsome man was seated with a long whip with white ribbons tied to it and with three prancing white horses straining to be off. The little girls were looking direct into the camera ; one of them was fair, vulnerable, and ingenuous, the other was dark. ' Is that you ? ' Mme Brettaud asked, pointing to the fair little girl. But Frau Federspiel only handed her another photograph. It was of a young man in officer's uniform, a vital man with bushy eyebrows and something unreliable in his expression. Then as a bird might snatch at a seed she caught it back again and pushed all the things away into a portfolio with a weary, almost disillusioned impatience. ' But you mustn't give me this beautiful brooch, it must have so many associations for you,' Mme Brettaud said, and then at the look of distress that flitted across the little lady's face she added impulsively, ' We will exchange brooches. You take mine and I'll take yours.' This seemed to please Frau Federspiel and she pinned the ruby brooch to her bodice and Mme Brettaud put the pearl where the ruby had been. They all had some strange hot aromatic drink from cups that were like a child's nursery cups. One was cracked, another had the handle missing and there were no saucers. Then Frau Federspiel said abruptly, ' I will show you how I grind the bones.' She led the way out as if she were about to take them on to a wide terrace of some great château. They went down some narrow stone steps into a cellar filled with the most depressing smell. There was one small window which looked as if it had been smoked over like the glass through which one sees eclipses of the sun. There was just light enough to make out great heaps of white bones lying in every corner. Here lay a horned ox head with long nose-



bone and here a sheep-skull grinning up at them. One might have been in some sinister charnel house by the sea, so damp and cold it was, for no ray of warmth ever penetrated to this interior. Mme Brettaud could hardly credit her senses, so extraordinary did the contrast seem between this little Watteau-like lady in her muslin girlish dress of long ago and this foul bone-house. The river roared past so close that if one could have opened the window it would hardly have been more than two arm's length away. There was a great round wheel to which a handle was attached and a place to drop the bones in and a place where they came out ground to powder. Mme Brettaud showed so much interest in the apparatus that its workings were demonstrated to her by Nikolas and she and Lorraine both turned the handle to see how easy it was.

'Wasn't it exciting, Maman !' Lorraine said on the way home. 'I don't think Papa would have liked it very much. I am sure Nikolas's mother must be queer, but I have never seen such a pretty lady and so dainty and not poor at all—and what was that drink we had ? Nickolas tells all sorts of things that I can hardly believe happen really. I wish we weren't going away so soon, I would so love to go again.'

When Mme Brettaud reached home she went softly in to her husband's study. He was sitting at a long table strewn over with drawings and papers of all kinds. 'I have had a rather distressing letter in this afternoon's post. I fear I may have to leave on Thursday instead of on Saturday as we had planned,' he said. Mme Brettaud's heart sank. She removed the brooch and slipped it into her bag.

The telegram M. Brettaud had been anticipating arrived the next afternoon and Lorraine's interest in Nikolas was completely lost in the excitement of going home. The

servants began hurrying about packing bags, sorting out linen, sweeping, dusting, and putting cupboards in order. An especial car was to come up the mountain road to fetch them at eight o'clock the next morning. Mme Brettaud was unusually silent. She wandered about sitting for a few minutes on a bench to gaze down towards the valley, then entered her room and remained shut away so that no one knew what she was doing. On several occasions during their evening meal she started to say something to her husband and then seemed to change her mind.

The next day dawned like so many others of that matchless climate, cool and dazzling, with the sky as blue as butterfly's wings and with the promise of a burning noon ahead. At the breakfast table, just as M. Brettaud was pouring a good helping of rich dairy cream into his cup of coffee, Mme Brettaud said nervously, 'I am not going with you and Lorraine, Aimé, I am going to stay here for another day—that is if you do not mind?' A look of consternation crossed M. Brettaud's face and then his usual urbanity asserted itself. In the end it was agreed that this whim of his wife's should be allowed as long as she kept one of the servants with her.

At the last moment, just as the bags and boxes had been put safely into the carrier at the back of the car, and the cook in a town coat was seated beside the chauffeur, Lorraine thought of Nikolas. She was about to get into the car beside her father, who was holding the lap-robe waiting for her, when she turned to her mother and said with real distress, 'Oh, Maman, what shall I do? I promised Nikolas to go and say good-bye to him to-morrow morning. Do you think you could find him for me if you went into the forest? I don't want him to be unhappy.' The engine was giving intermittent starts and M. Brettaud was approach-

ing as near impatience as was possible for one of his temperament.

That night as the moonlight flooded mountain-top and valley, shining in between the black motionless trunks of the tall forest trees, lying bland upon the shingled roof-tops of the scattered peasant houses, on the aromatic sloping hay-fields, on the sundried timber cattle fences that skirted the forest, on the smooth wet stones over which the river ceaselessly washed, it made a path through Nikolas's window along which the dwarf came floating to the bottom of the bed. This time he carried a golden key in his hand, and holding it up before Nikolas he said, 'I have here the key to the heart of the Princess Irma, and you must climb the Älplihorn mountain and pluck for her a bunch of edelweiss, and if you do this she will reward you with her love and will come back one day.' Nikolas's nights had been filled with nothing but dreams of Lorraine, his days had been one long trembling anticipation of that moment when he would see her figure approaching him through the trees; then were the brief flashing periods when she would sit at his side and he would encourage his fantasies to grow wilder and wilder, then the same anxious anticipation would begin over again. He had never been at ease with anyone before except his mother, and with his mother he never communicated the imaginative side of his life that was so far more real to him than the ordinary day-by-day existence the edges of which he touched at school and with the people of the village. Underneath the levels of consciousness where his thoughts dwelt on Lorraine disquieting doubts stirred as if at some future time life might appear differently to him, but he drifted sensuously in the melting moments, with his sweet-breathed animals, letting his heart open utterly to this little girl who tripped in her airy frocks in

bare brown knees in and out of his enchanted days. When the dwarf appeared before him uttering those prophetic words he believed them. He would have faced every ogre in Christendom, slain dragons, scaled fortified walls, swum across seas of blood, if he had been told that thus he could keep Lorraine for ever near him.

At the very first suggestion of dawn he was out of bed and in his clothes. He was anxious not to disturb his mother and kept his shoes in his hand and avoided the particular stairs that he knew made a creaking sound, but at the bottom in his awkward fashion he struck against something and in a second she was aroused and had come out to see who was there. She wore a long childish cotton nightgown and her hair made a thick mat all about her shoulders. The soft absent look had gone from her eyes and they were filled with terror, a child's inarticulate, unfathomable terror. 'Go back to bed, Mother,' Nikolas said. 'I am going out, but will be home again for breakfast.' She did not question him or protest but pattered back in her bare feet to her alcove bed.

The place where the eidelweiss grew was far up on the mountain in the exact opposite direction from where Nikolas always led his cows. The fresh morning air brought the blood to his cheeks and he forgot the look he had seen in his mother's eyes. As he climbed he gave little sharp cries of exultation like the cries of some uncommon animal. He did not keep to the cow-paths but went on and on straight up the side of the mountain, pulling himself by the roots of trees or holding on to rocks. Finally he came to a particularly abrupt declivity where he had to cross a rushing stream, the force of the water almost knocking him down, but he still continued his upward climb until on a high ledge he found the strange Alpine flowers, flowers

of the peaks and of the sky, so pale, so cold at that hour of dawn, and so soft to the touch as he picked them with long, eager fingers.

When Mme Brettaud woke on the morning after she had seen her husband and little girl off to Geneva she took her coffee which Berthe had brought up to her and dressed rapidly. She was about to go out of the door when she hesitated and returned to her dressing-table. Opening one of the drawers she lifted out a jewel-box and one by one examined the contents in their neatly fitting trays. At last she came to a child's locket shaped like a heart made entirely of turquoise forget-me-nots. It had been given her on her tenth birthday—just Lorraine's age—by an aunt who was now dead. The trinket possessed a secret spring that was released by a tiny golden key. She prized it more than all her other jewels put together. She had loved this old aunt whom her family rather despised and had always honoured her memory. It seemed a fitting ornament for this happy day that she would spend alone and she fastened it on to an old gold chain and put it around her neck.

As she stepped out into the clear crisp mountain air she felt a sudden contraction of the heart lest her little daughter's careless departure might bring real unhappiness to her rude playmate. Her whole mind was bent on finding Nikolas and making up to him in some way for the disappointment he would be sure to experience when he knew that Lorraine, after her heedless fashion, had gone away without saying good-bye to him. She stepped lightly along the cattle-path in the direction in which she hoped she would be able to find him. Presently she heard the jingle-jangle of the cow-bells and then he came in view walking with a kind of consecrated gravity, his face sober and pale under its coat of tan. In one hand he carried his long cow-herd's staff,

and in the other he clasped tightly a bunch of eidelweiss. She hurried forward to meet him. As they came opposite each other he looked up at her with an expression of bewildered astonishment, and a little abashed she hurriedly began to explain to him the reason for her presence. 'You mustn't be disappointed, Nikolas. My little girl could not come. It was really her father's fault. He has taken her back to Geneva with him.' Just at this moment Mme Brettaud's attention was deflected by the sudden fierce chattering outburst of a squirrel over their heads, sounds of such unbridled hostility that she could hardly credit her ears.

A heart may be broken in less time than it takes a bird to fly across the sky. During those brief seconds in which Mme Brettaud was gazing up through the branches of the pine tree at the pointed malicious ears of the angry little animal a profound revolution was taking place in Nikolas's mind. It was as if the illusions of his childhood were dropping from him as completely as a snake sheds its skin and he was standing naked in the torrid glare of a new base and hideous reality. He had been living in a false world. Lorraine had been laughing at him all the time, pretending to believe his stories when she did not, getting entertainment from his rustic stupidities, his mother was different from other people and the peasants knew it and everybody knew it, and the other children pointed him out with derision. His whole citadel of dreams was falling about his ears. It was as though a huge cow had walked upon and demolished utterly his beautiful castle. There were no dwarfs, no little men and women who danced upon his bed, no Princess Irma, no Castle of Bergfriede. There was but himself—a poor, clumsy, ragged, ignorant cow-boy living in a dirty home with a mad mother. Mme Brettaud had never seen any human countenance betray such profound unmitigable

misery. The expression on his face took the light from the sun. It was as if she had been made witness to some hopeless tragedy of betrayed human innocence that nothing could alter or stay. A sudden impulse came to her. She would give him her own little locket that she had put on that morning as if it had come from Lorraine. It might solace his desperate grief. She unfastened the chain and held the locket out to him. 'This is something my daughter asked me to bring to you,' she said. His face remained a mask of dejection. Then she began showing him the minute golden key, and in a flash his whole manner changed, for surely it was the symbolic counterpart of the one that he had seen held between the spatulate finger and thumb of his nocturnal messenger. 'You see,' Mme Brettaud continued, 'here is a sign to you from Lorraine. The forget-me-nots mean that you are not to forget her and that she will not forget you and the key too has a secret significance, for it releases a vital spring in this true heart.'

From the crown of his head to the soles of his feet a feeling of pure unalloyed happiness coursed through Nikolas's whole being. The sun was once more bright in the heavens, he loved his cows, he would not have changed his mother for any other mother in the whole wide world, and the nights and days could never be long enough to contain his dreams. Soberly he took the locket and with scrupulous care placed it with its gold key in his one trustworthy pocket, removing from it first a bell he had fashioned out of a piece of tin, some tarred cord, a wooden whistle with a cuckoo carved at the end, and some peanut husks. It was not his intention to indulge his eagerness for a more close examination of his treasure until he was alone and undisturbed amongst the congregation of silent trees and unobtrusive cows. He now turned with the utmost gravity

towards Lorraine's mother, and holding out the eidelweiss, he said, 'Will you give these to her and tell her I was on the top of the mountain this morning and gathered them for her by the decree of one she knows of.'

Mme Brettaud had not gone more than a hundred yards when she felt an impulse to look round. The scene she then witnessed became for her a charmed vision for the rest of her life. The arms of the outlandish boy were around the neck of a huge mouse-coloured cow, and upon his shoulder was perched the elfin squirrel who had so resented the intrusion of her presence in his familiar companion's sylvan solitude.

*Switzerland.*



## POLO AND BROWN TROUT.

BY CAPT. E. H. W. COBB, R.E.

WHERE India's northernmost boundary threads its way among the mighty peaks and glaciers of the Karakoram and the Hindu Kush, there lies that fascinating little country called Chitral. Away beyond it to the north is the cradle of the Oxus River in the high Pamirs.

Northwards, too, are those far-away places, Samarkand, Kashgar and Yarkand, in their stony plains on 'the roof of the world.' Their names seem almost legendary, and of a surety it is their distance that has lent them most of their enchantment.

But for the sportsman at any rate Chitral is a veritable little Paradise. Its more inaccessible recesses teem with ibex and markhor, red bear and snow leopard; while the deep valleys are full of that splendid little game-bird, the chikor. It is a country which the Creator has fashioned in true 'perpendicular' style. At its centre Tirich Mir raises its lofty knife-edges to 26,550 feet, hitherto unclimbed by man and peopled by the local inhabitants with whole armies of picturesque fairies, some good, and some bad. Its crevasses, too, to them, are denized by the dreaded 'boghazoo,' the glacier-frog which grows to the size of a small cow and preys on any luckless mortal rash enough to violate its hidden sanctuaries.

The Chitral River, which flows down the country's central valley through deep inspiring gorges till it reaches the Kabul River in Afghanistan near Jelalabad, runs clear and comparatively quiet in the winter when the glaciers

and snow-fields which feed it are frozen hard. But in the late spring and summer, when the glaciers and the snow begin to melt, it turns to a boiling chocolate torrent, trundling great boulders with it in its headlong flood. Few fish could live long in it, but the lower side-valleys abound in small spring-fed streams which flow more gently all the year between grassy banks, and which would promise good sport if they were full of brown trout, instead of the bottom-feeding snow trout, which is the only fish to thrive in them at present. These latter will seldom take a fly and offer little fight, while they fail still more sadly as a breakfast dish, tasting as they do, of mud-tainted cotton-wool impregnated with a thousand needles.

Gilgit, Chitral's north-eastern neighbour, has been more fortunate and the brown trout imported some twenty years ago from Kashmir have thrived wonderfully well and give great sport and a very welcome change of diet to the few who are fortunate enough to be posted to that far-away outpost of empire.

I happened to be spending the summer in camp at Harchin at the northern end of Chitral, building a suspension bridge there to replace one which had been carried away by a great flood two years before. It was only a few miles short of the 12,250-foot Shandur Pass into Gilgit, and as soon as I had arrived in May I had crossed over to Ghizar in Gilgit on the invitation of a friend, for a week's unforgettable trout-fishing. My bag of eighty-two in seven days, averaging close on a pound, spurred me to an attempt to carry enough fish over the pass to stock a small hatchery at Mastuj, from which it would be possible in time to stock some of the more accessible streams near Chitral and Drosh, the headquarters of the small military garrison. The following is an account of how things befell.

The passes were still difficult in May, covered deeply as they were with melting snow, and the snow water had already started to discolour the Gilgit River. So the attempt was perforce postponed until the autumn, when the stream would start to clear again. Nothing could be done in the meantime beyond the preparation of the hatchery and the collection of some forty empty four-gallon oil-cans, that very ubiquitous commodity in the East. These were ready to hand, as the cement for the bridge had come up in them. They were soon fitted with handles and their many leaks, due to their 280 miles journey up from railhead at Dargai in British India on camel and donkey back, repaired.

Nor was the hatchery a more difficult problem. The old fort of Mastuj, a short march away down the valley from Harchin, stands at a height of 8,000 feet on an open wind-swept saltpetre marsh at the confluence of the Laspur and Yarkhun rivers, some eighty from the latter's source near the Oxus in the Pamirs. Desolate to a degree throughout its long six months of winter, Mastuj takes on a kindlier aspect as soon as spring sets in in May: its apricot and mulberry orchards, and the green mosaic of its slanting fields forming a very pleasant contrast to the circle of vast barren mountains which surround it.

A mile from the fort a tremendous spring gushes from the foot of a barren scree, to spread over the plain and drain eventually into the river some two miles away. The local inhabitants had in time past built small banks two or three feet in height across the stream every few hundred feet. The ponds so formed were to attract the duck and geese on their spring and autumn flights to and from India, and the highest of these ponds, about half an acre in extent, suggested itself at once as an almost ideal natural hatchery. The villagers assured me that it was always free from ice

in the severest winter, and pointed, as proof of its suitability, to the shoals of snow trout with which it teemed. It was full also of natural food. It was only the work of a few days to put down a grating of fine wire netting across the outflow, and to heighten its banks by a few more inches and strengthen them against any danger of collapse.

So far, so good. The trout tins and the hatchery were ready, but the problem of catching the trout and carrying them thirty-three miles by hand over a goat-track pass close on 14,000 feet in height, without losing all or most of them on the way, still remained, and threatened to be difficult of solution.

A hundred seemed to be a good round figure to aim at putting down, and I had budgeted for a coolie gang large enough to carry forty tins, some filled with trout and some for spare water. How many fish must one start with to be sure of ending with a hundred alive—oh? How many fish would go in a tin? How big a fish could travel safely? How often would we have to change the water in the tins? What effect would an altitude of nearly 14,000 feet on the top of the pass have on the trout? Would there be fresh water available all the way, not too cold and not too hot?

These questions and fifty more all clamoured urgently for an answer. The villagers in Ghizar who had seen fish carried there had all been annoyingly vague and contradictory when I had tackled them on the subject in May. Some had said that tiddlers travelled best, while others had been in favour of two- and even three-year olds. Some had said that it was only safe to carry them at night, and some that a lot depended on the wind and the moon. The verdict of one and all was that no sooner was a trout inside a tin than his good health became a matter of the merest touch and go, and I was duly pessimistic.

It was not till mid-August that a long expected answer came to most of my queries from the Gilgit Fishing Secretary. Though only six marches away by direct road, the Shandur Pass intervened as a postal 'watershed,' and my letter had unexpectedly taken seventeen days on its long journey down through Chitral, Dir and Malakand to Peshawar and then Rawal-Pindi, and thence up through Kashmir and over the Burzil Pass to Gilgit. His letter in reply had taken as long, and it was only just in time, for a few days later the welcome news came over from Ghizar that the side-streams were clearing and would be fit for catching as many trout as I wanted in another ten days' time.

In May I had crossed and recrossed the Shandur Pass on skis, but it was very different now in early September. 'Pass' is perhaps rather a misleading name, as the Shandur is really a mountain plain sloping gently down from the base of its surrounding peaks and crags to a central lake some four miles long, from which there is no outflow at either end. It is on the boundary between Gilgit and Chitral and boasts two polo-grounds of perfect natural turf by the lake-side. Thanks to the snow they are only playable for two months in the year, August and September. Often, indeed, three or four years may elapse without a game being played on either of them, as it is only when enthused by some touring British officer or official that the locals arrange a match.

I had sent a few days' warning of my arrival to the native Governor of Gupis in Gilgit with a challenge to him of a friendly polo-match, Chitral versus Gilgit, on the pass. My message had reached him at the foot of the pass on the Gilgit side, fixing land disputes and revenue, and I found him and all his numerous retinue encamped on the pass when I arrived there late one evening just as the sun was

setting. His tents were three or four hundred yards away from mine, and partially hidden by a slight rise in the ground. But from the glare of the brushwood fires which soon started to twinkle in the dusk, and the neighing of countless ponies, it seemed that there was to be no lack of spectators on the morrow. I eventually fell asleep to the distant throbbing of his local band which played far on into the night.

At sunrise I was rudely awakened by a frenzied serenade at close range. The Governor with the best intentions of courtesy had sent over his band to greet me, and there they were—two men and a boy—perched on a small mound not far from my tent, ushering in the dawn passionately and fortissimo. One man wielded a ‘surnai,’ a gourd-shaped reed instrument of dubious pitch not unlike the weapon from which a snake-charmer extracts his wailing drone. The other played a pair of dome-shaped kettledrums of goat-skins stretched over a copper base, while the boy throbbed at a ‘dol,’ or tom-tom, with the fingers and thumbs of both hands.

After two hours of energetic playing the Governor himself was announced and approached to pay his salaams—a dear old patriarch with a henna-dyed beard. It must have been many years since he had played his last game of polo.

Chitrali is the natural dialect at this western extremity of Gilgit and so conversation was not difficult, though the old man wasted few words in discussing the weather and the details of our match in the afternoon, while we watched some of his men and some of the Chitralies dance for our benefit. He departed with a courteous bow, while his following and the band betook themselves to the polo ground to play tirelessly with few intervals until the afternoon on diminutive country-bred mares and pack ponies.

Polo in the countries of its origin is a very different game

from the one that is to be seen at Hurlingham, and a brief description of it is perhaps worth while. In Hunza, Nagar, Chitral and Gilgit the game is played on a narrow ground 150 to 300 yards long and 20 to 50 yards wide, usually with a rough stone wall along each side. It is not unusual on the smaller village grounds for a small irrigation water-channel to meander diagonally across them, affording the additional hazard of a water-jump : while on another I well remember a thick clump of wild irises which grew just in front of one of the goal-mouths, and provided a somewhat unfair bunker. Few of the grounds are flat and a long shot at goal requires the same nicety of touch and direction as a long putt on a billowy green. The game starts with the captain of the side winning the toss taking the 'tumbook.' He starts by galloping '*ventre-à-terre*' from one goal-line, carrying the ball in his hand and with his reins flying loose in the wind. On reaching the centre of the ground he throws the ball into the air and aims a stupendous blow at it with his stick. If he is lucky, and his aim is good, the ball sails away in the direction of goal, and he gallops on in an attempt to score, followed by the rest of both teams. The same procedure is followed after every goal scored, the privilege of taking the tumbook being generally allowed to the scorer, and there is no doubt that it adds greatly to the spectacular aspect of the game. An accurate tumbook, particularly on the smaller grounds, occasionally results in a goal without the need of a further hit, but the merit of a tumbook is more usually assessed by the spectators from the height and distance which the ball travels in the air, or by the fact that it sails away and is lost in a nearby field ; rather as a schoolboy values a six at cricket far higher, if the ball is lost or succeeds in breaking a dormitory window.

The sticks differ greatly from a highly-finished Lillywhite product. The shaft has no loop or handle and is generally made of almond wood, while the head is a roughly-hewn baulk of willow, thick at the near end where the shaft enters it, and tapering almost to a point. The head is set on too at a very obtuse angle to enable the player to reach a distant ball in a scrimmage without taking a divot with the near end of the head.

The ball itself, unless presented by the Sahib, is a solid chunk of willow-root of a most unseemly weight and about as dangerous in flight as a small shell.

The goal-posts are sometimes a pair of well-placed trees, but more usually two rough stones, which result in heated arguments whenever a slightly lifted ball scores a goal. In Hunza and Nagar a goal is by no means so easy. When the ball has been hit through the posts it is not counted a goal until the scorer or a player of the same side has dismounted or leant from his saddle and picked up the ball, and whilst one side is attempting to achieve this feat, the other does all it can to hit the ball back into play.

Another delightful feature is that any player is allowed to catch the ball if he can, and can score a goal by galloping with it between the posts. The bumpiness of the village grounds and the irregularity of the boundary walls makes this manœuvre frequently possible, and the locals are very adept at chipping the ball up for themselves or to some member of their side. A player who is carrying the ball in this way becomes fair game and can be collared and pulled off his pony by his opponents, who may also seize his bridle until he has dropped the ball or passed it to a member of his own side.

When the ball goes out at the side it is thrown in at once by the nearest spectator in any direction he may fancy, and



when it goes behind it is thrown far into the game again like the throw in of a cricket ball from the deep field.

The ponies usually measure between 12 and 13 hands and their speed and endurance is amazing. The game which is played on one pony throughout does not normally last for so many chukkers, but until one side has scored nine goals, and it is not unusual for a game to go on for an hour or so, while half an hour would be considered absurdly short. I remember playing one day in Mastuj after riding in twenty-three miles in the morning. After three-quarters of an hour of furious play on the same pony that had carried me all day, I suggested to the local hakim who had ridden in with me that it was time that we stopped. He replied, without a thought to the exhausted condition of his pony, that the light certainly *was* getting rather uncertain.

The locals usually play anything from four to ten a side. Rules against any form of dangerous play do not exist and it is unusual for a game to be completed without loss of blood on both sides. Apart from other more dangerous fouls, one of the most exasperating features of the game is to have one's stick hooked or knocked out of one's hand by somebody on the far side of one's pony from the ball—a form of *gaucherie* sternly disallowed at Hurlingham.

Combination is of the very slightest when it exists at all, and it is more usual for all the players of the side to gallop simultaneously for the ball. In Chitral at any rate there are only two recognised places on the field—one player is 'back,' the remainder are 'on the ball.' In Gilgit the standard is appreciably higher, owing in the main to the annual inter-district tournament at the Political Agent's Durbar in the spring.

The teams for our match on the pass were fixed at five a side, and a band. Throughout the game, by the way, each

side's band plays furiously and continuously, rising to fortissimo when a tumbook is taken or a goal is scored. It is extraordinary how essential this accompaniment is considered. Indeed, on asking whether polo can be arranged, I have frequently been told that it was impossible owing to the absence of the band. The band continues to play after the game, when it is the custom for the winners to make the losers dance for their amusement.

Our match was fast and furious, and falls were not infrequent, due to tripped ponies or an over-bold lean outwards to reach a distant ball, and saddlery of poor reliability. The superior combination of the Gilgit team soon made itself felt and they led by two goals at half-time after thirty minutes of hectic play. Then a five-minute breather to bandage the wounded, two on our side and one on theirs—cuts on the head by an opponent's stick in all three cases.

The second half must have lasted for forty-five minutes at least before I called a halt. Even then the sturdy little Badakshi ponies showed astonishingly little sign of fatigue in spite of the rarefied atmosphere at 12,250 feet above sea-level. More bandaging of casualties, followed by congratulation of the winners and an exhibition of dancing, until the sudden dusk ended the entertainment. I had reason to remember the match for many a day. I was following up a most promising tumbook, when the opposing back, a tiny man mounted on a pony little larger than a St. Bernard dog, crossed my bows almost at right angles, and I and my pony came down in a real bone-shaking crash in which my right ankle came off distinctly second best.

My time was short, so I left early next morning for Ghizar armed with my fishing-rod, a mosquito net and my forty tins for carrying the trout. It was at Ghizar that the trout had first been put down sixteen years before and it would

be hard to picture a more ideal spot for them. The river, some twenty yards wide here, for nine months in the year is as clear as crystal, flowing placidly along between high grass banks lined with stunted willows, and with occasional rapids. It affords a wonderful contrast to the boulder-strewn nullah-beds of Chitral, or indeed of any part of the North-West Frontier, which in flood-time change their course during a night and roll down with them great rocks and boulders with a roar like thunder.

The bigger fish had most of them gravitated twenty or thirty miles downstream below a steep fall in the river, and in deep clear water there I saw fish that must turn the scale at close on ten pounds. There were three-pounders to be had at Ghizar too, but they seldom rose to a fly and would have been more likely to take a minnow. The river literally teemed with smaller fish. The water had been clear for over a week and they were as greedy morning and afternoon as one could wish them to be, and all of them in perfect condition. In under three days I had caught seventy-one, averaging half a pound, on a fly, while my bearer and half a dozen coolies, paddling about with my mosquito-net in small channels, and outlying pools left by the falling river, caught about a hundred and fifty, averaging four ounces.

We had made a small pond in a narrow channel close to our tents, closed top and bottom by closely woven hurdles, and into this we put the trout as they were caught, until by the third evening we had over two hundred.

The coolies were divided into gangs of six with each pair carrying two tins slung from a pole on their shoulders. In each gang, too, there was a spare man with two empty tins for fresh water, and the success of his labours seemed to be the vital key. The journey must take some thirty-six hours. The water in every tin must be changed night and

day at least twice an hour. Would they do it? Bribes seemed to be the only answer, and I offered them freely for the gang which got over the pass with the fewest casualties.

The moon was due to rise at midnight. Tenderly at dusk we spooned out the trout one by one in an old landing-net, and put four or five in each tin, and I turned in for a few hours' sleep before our labours were to start. I was awakened at moon-rise, three hours later, with the ghastly news that all the trout in the tins were already dead.

Closer investigation with a lantern showed that out of one hundred and sixty, fifty-two were indeed floating belly-upwards, while half the remainder looked very neurotic. A bitter disappointment, and a poor start, but the best plan seemed to be to redistribute the fish that were left, and start the coolie convoy on their first stage of fifteen miles to the foot of the pass, after making up what losses we could from the thirty odd fish still remaining in the pond in which we had stored them. They were off in half an hour's time, with their spare empty tins clang-clanging away into the night, leaving one gang with their tins for me to fill with fresh trout as soon as it was light.

At dawn an hour's casting with two droppers on in a shallow rapid rewarded me with twenty trout averaging a quarter to half a pound, and two of a pound each, a male and a female, to each of whom we gave a tin to themselves. A hurried breakfast and we too were off, dreading at every bend in the road to see last night's convoy returning with tins full of dead trout.

Our luck was in. The débâcle of the previous evening had impressed the coolies more than any words of mine could do, that the water really *must* be changed every half-hour, and when we caught them up soon after noon the casualty list totalled twenty and only rose to twenty-four by the evening.

In spite of its extra thousand feet of height and the three-mile gap at the top between the highest springs on either side of the watershed we had chosen the Chamarkhand Pass (13,600 feet) in preference to the Shandur, as being the shorter route to Mastuj by five or six miles. We were halted now at 10,000 feet or so, with the tins in the shade of a few stunted birch trees, resting and waiting for the sun to sink before making a hurried dash over the pass before dark to a good halting-place on the far side. It was a pleasant enough spot beside an ice-cold stream, as clear as crystal, which tumbled steeply down the valley through a tangle of dwarf silver birches. Bare grass-slopes on either side towered up to beetling crags and snow-capped peaks, solitary and immense, their vast scale seeming to dwarf man to puny nothingness.

We were off again at 3.30 p.m. to top the pass wearily at dusk, and drop stumblingly down 3,000 feet of slippery goat-track in the gathering darkness. Only eight more casualties among the trout this time, with four more while the coolies enjoyed four hours of well-earned sleep before we started off again on the last lap of eleven miles as soon as the moon rose again soon after midnight. There were several degrees of frost when we started which froze the ground hard and made the going easier, but the temperature rose quickly as the long column dropped down the valley. It was a race against time now. Could we get to the hatchery before the sun rose and made it necessary to halt somewhere in the shade till evening? Two or three of the gangs went off at a great pace, and we soon had a change of coolies for the others, collected from the first village we came to in the Yarkhun Valley. It seemed to grow stifflingly hotter every minute, but as luck would have it at daybreak a few stray clouds appeared from nowhere and

hid the sun until the last gang had reached the hatchery, and we had carefully emptied the 136th trout into it. No more had died on the way, but thirty or forty had come very near to it, and drifted aimlessly about for an hour or two scarcely showing a sign of life. Not so, one of the two larger ones, whose first action within a few seconds of his release was to seize and consume a small snow-trout about three inches long of which there were a great number in the hatchery. This was interesting as there have never been any snow-trout at Ghizar, though they abound ten miles farther downstream below a steep fall in the river which they have never been able to negotiate. There too their numbers are rapidly diminishing, as the larger trout which have gravitated down from Ghizar in recent years, are rapidly killing and ousting them.

Some of the brown trout were considerably exhausted after their thirty-six hours in tins, and a few moments after their release in the hatchery, a biggish water-snake seized one weighing about six ounces by coiling its tail round it, and attempted to drag it out on to the bank, until it was itself despatched by the coolies who had carried the tins and were watching the proceeding. The following day a slightly smaller snake was seen to attack one of the larger brown trout, but he had mistaken his opponent and the trout turned and broke his assailant's back.

So ended a very pleasurable exploit, the labours of which will be amply repaid by news one day yet to come that trout can really be caught within comfortable reach of Drosh and Chitral. What, alas, seems more likely is that during a long and hungry winter the temptation amongst the half-starved local inhabitants will be too great, and a couple of sticks of dynamite will ring down the curtain on that precious little hatchery for all time.

## THE ROYAL CRUSADER.

*On a flag azure,  
 A Lion gardant d'or  
 Trembles in the wind . . .  
 Richard Cœur de Lion  
 Is dead. No more  
 The trumpets trill of triumphs  
 In the Holy Land : no horns  
 Proclaim Crusading victories.  
 The solemn sackbuts sound  
 A dirge ; while muffled drums  
 Drone on, and hautboys  
 Wail. Richard is dead !*

*A thousand armoured knights  
 Weep for their King,  
 Remembering battles shared  
 At Ascalon and Acre. O, weep !  
 Lest you forget how brave  
 Proud warriors, fresh from the field,  
 Covered with glory, the blood red  
 Cross of God upon their breasts,  
 Sprawled drunken at the feet  
 Of harlots . . . The untamed Saracens  
 And heathen Saladin would weep  
 For Richard now. Alas ! The Lion,  
 Once leader, feared by men,  
 And women ; lustful in love ;*

*Quick to anger ; the paragon  
Of earthly power and cruelty,  
Is dead. Yet does he live  
In divers Empires and States,  
And in the hearts of cruel men  
That pierced the hands of Christ  
Who would have blessed them  
In the Holy Land. ' Revenge,'  
They cry, ' on those that killed  
Our Lord ! ' Then they must die.*

*Man, foolish with common sense,  
Created in the image, not the mind  
Of his Creator ; putting his trust  
In Princes, not in God ;  
Striving to right a wrong with wrong ;  
Hoping to end all wars  
With yet another war ; persecuting  
The meek, worshipping the strong ;  
Ready to die for hate  
But not for love,  
Follows the Lion's Crusading Cross,  
Scarlet, and trivial, and dead.*

*The drums are silent now :  
The last gasping chord  
Of sorrow's song has fled  
The lips of those that mourn  
For Richard. The knights  
Have cast their armour off ;  
Their eyes, their tears.  
Silence reigns. The King is dead.*



*Long live the King ! God save him  
From so sad an end as this :  
To die and lose a crown,  
And gain—nothing. Another  
Lost a martyr's crown of thorns,  
And gained a Kingdom :  
But He was King of Kings.  
His Word and Faith  
Were mightier than the sword  
Of Richard, or ten thousand Richards.  
He prophesied the day  
When men, sick of common sense,  
Too wise to worship heroes ;  
Too meek to hate their foes,  
Will love their enemies, and  
Do good to those that hate them.*

*That day will breathe the last  
Of war. Men will inherit  
The earth in meekness and humility.  
It will not be the Lion,  
But the Lamb, a little child,  
Shall lead them . . . On the first eve  
Of Christmas, in a sky azure,  
A Star gardant d'or,  
Twinkling over Bethlehem,  
Bringing hope of peace  
And good will toward men,  
Cast light, and showed the Way.*

DENNIS STOLL.

## WAYFARERS' CAROL.

*Snow is falling o'er the hills ;  
 Those who tarry, if God wills,  
     Home may win.  
 Wanderers abroad, and lost,  
 Footsore, and mayhap storm-tossed,  
     Far from kin—  
     Look up, pray !  
 On Christmas Eve, of old they say,  
 Cometh help to light the way !*

*Every twisting thorny tree  
 Within is lit so fierily ;  
     Shadowless,  
 And sheltering from all that's wild  
 His candle, comes a little child.  
     Loveliness  
     Beyond compare  
 Dwells about Him ; and most dear  
 The yellow light that He doth bear.*

*Straightly to His feet hangs down  
 His shining crocus-coloured gown ;  
     Round His head  
 A circle of immortal light  
 Whirls with swiftness infinite ;  
     At His tread  
     Blossoms spring ;  
 Wandering brothers, let us sing  
 To this Youngling's journeying :  
     Gloria, Gloria  
     In excelsis Deo !*

J. MACLEOD.

## BY THE WAY.

CHRISTMAS approaches : 'Peace on earth, good will towards men.' Hitler has confirmed the old view that Christmas is to be regarded as a time of peace—but 'towards men?' Is a Jew, for example, a man? Shylock, I remember, gave us some reasons for thinking so, but they do not now seem to be regarded as cogent in Germany for all that country's admiration for Shakespeare, who should really, I think I have heard it declared, have been a German. Hardly : if he had one quality, his poetry apart, more highly developed than another, it was a tolerance that certainly has never been noticeable in our Continental strivers.

\*            \*            \*

Meanwhile, what about these absurd little death-traps of short lengths of trenches disfiguring our parks, for no apparent purpose, past, present, or to come?

\*            \*            \*

I was present the other day at a literary discussion which was not without significance : the writings of a young man were being debated by a group of men who were all experienced judges ; not one could offer any explanation of the meaning of any of the verses, and yet five out of the eleven taking part in the discussion gave it as their opinion that they showed considerable merit, gifts of imagination and so forth. How it can be maintained that the unintelligible does this was at no time made clear : it would still seem to me that unless meaning of some sort can be attached to writing, it must be without merit—but this, I am well aware, is not the opinion held by eminent critics to-day.

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Not being an eminent critic, however, I cannot but maintain it. I had, for instance, every desire cordially to

commend the *Collected Poems* of Laura Riding (Cassell, 15s. n.); she has been praised, she has given evidence in other work of conscientious endeavour, and I opened her collection with high hope. But I cannot understand any of it: it begins with a lengthy puzzle of an introduction saying that she has been persistently accused of 'difficulty,' adding 'I have learned from my poems what, completely and precisely, the scope of poetry is; and any reader may learn the same.' I fail. These poems have been written, the author says, 'for all the reasons of poetry': it may be so, but as they have no recognizable rhythm, music, metre, or intelligibility I am no wiser. With the best will possible I simply cannot make head or tail of a single one, and the illustrations in the last section as, for instance, that of naked persons watching devils who are precariously poised on the edge of a precipice flinging down skeletons, seem as obnoxious as they are obscure. Here is a typical poem called 'All the Time,' selected quite at random:

*By after long appearance  
Appears the time the all the time  
Name please now you may go.*

*By after love time and she knows  
And he says rose  
Unless unless if not.*

*Or if if sometimes if  
How like myself I was  
Among the salt and minutes.*

And the author says 'I begin every poem on the most elementary plane of understanding'! The volume contains 477 pages of this kind of thing. Sad, very sad.

★   ★   ★

I have devoted space to the above because there can be no doubting the fact that modern criticism has taken for

its motto, *omne ignotum pro magnifico*, and it is a sad sign of our times. Let us now turn to the interesting, and perhaps it is a compensating sign that they are, at this season at any rate, 'as thick as the leaves in Vallombrosa' (to commit the solecism of quoting a dead master of melody) and to each can only be given a brevity of reference, and then only to a handful out of the heap.

In defiance, then, of the prevailing critical custom of ignoring all poetry but the incomprehensible, let me begin by calling special attention to the work of an enduring poet, the beautiful little volume by Laurence Binyon entitled *Brief Candles* (Golden Cockerel, 3s. 6d.) and charmingly illustrated by his daughter: those who have not already procured it are advised to make good the omission by purchase or gift not later than Christmas Day.

*Verse-fashions wax and wane,  
But Laurence Binyons remain.*

There are not many of them; let us clasp those we have greedily to our bosoms.

The next poet on my list leads to autobiography, not of the usual kind. Keith Henderson has ingeniously and skilfully pieced together from his diaries, letters, and poems, and from comments by contemporary intimates, 'arbitrarily arranged,' the editor declares, 'to make a continuous story,' the life-story of the Scottish national poet. *Burns—by Himself* (Methuen, 12s. 6d. n.) is perhaps, as far as its text goes, for the reader who is already a lover of Burns—the many illustrations, really distinguished woodcuts by Keith Henderson, are for all and make the book a valued possession. Another autobiography, also hardly of the usual kind, is Logan Pearsall Smith's *Unforgotten Years* (Constable, 10s. n.): the author ranges easily and with a very graceful blend of fancy

and remembrance over his years, telling us of early days in Philadelphia, of Walt Whitman, Matthew Arnold, Jowett and Balliol, Whistler and Paris, Henry James and Sussex, and, not least, of his valuable sport 'hunting for MSS.'—a delightful medley.

From autobiography to biography, which will the reader have, the heroic of soul or one almost deified after death, though hardly (in the opinion of many !) God-like upon earth ? The choice is there and the omnivorous can enjoy both : for the first there are two, both '*of the Antarctic*,' namely '*Birdie*' Bowers and *Charcot*, both published by Murray, the first written by George Seaver (10s. 6d. n.), the second by Marthe Oulié (12s. 6d. n.). Both of these are deserving of high commendation for their treatment and for their subjects : Jean Charcot was indubitably a great Frenchman, as great in his own career of exploration as was his father in medicine. '*Birdie*' Bowers was a man worthy to die beside Scott and Edward Wilson—and higher praise can be given to none. I am not sure that this biography is not as fine a piece of work as was George Seaver's *Edward Wilson*—and that has been long endeared to thousands. But *Lenin* (Longmans, 10s. 6d. n.)—what is it possible to say of Lenin ? Christopher Hollis could hardly make his 'portrait of a professional revolutionary' pleasing or even acceptable to all, he could hardly fail to make it interesting and he has not failed. '*Lenin*,' writes Mr. Hollis at the end of the strange, tragic, absorbing career, 'had demanded of his picked followers an utter sacrifice of all love and all ambition, but at the same time he stripped from them those comforts of religion through which alone rare souls have been capable of utter sacrifices . . . They worshipped him—which he did not ask of them—and failed him.'

From the study of heroes and a revolutionary—a word of fairly impartial calibre—it is a natural transition to pass to the study of strange lands: J. B. Morton has gone a-wandering with excellent results: *Pyrenean* (Longmans, 8s. 6d. n.) is his simple title, and he has produced a book which has the characteristic attraction and humour both of his former books and of the country of his recent wanderings. Sten Bergman has gone farther afield: his wanderings have been *In Korean Wilds and Villages* (Gifford, 12s. 6d. n.) and he has much to tell of these little-known places that has its interest to-day—the text is well translated by Frederic Whyte. Thirdly, John dos Passos has produced a tale of many wanderings, which he calls *Journeys between Wars* (Constable, 12s. 6d. n.) in Spain, Russia, the Orient and again in Spain, a record of variety and vivacity.

From wanderers I turn to those who, by force of circumstances, avoidable perhaps but at any rate compelling, are the reverse, namely, prisoners. Two are before me, differing as much in calibre and treatment as in title, and yet not dissimilar, essentially, in subject: the one is called *A Happy Fortnight* (Peter Davies, 8s. 6d. n.) and is F. G. Stanley's rather complacent account of his own career as a burglar and recent reformation. I did not find this as interesting as Sir John Squire's preface had led me to hope. The other, *Men in Cages* by H. U. Triston (Gifford, 8s. 6d. n.), is written in the spirit of sentences which occur in its midst—'The men in prison are just the same as you and me. A bit weaker, perhaps, but that is all. And for that reason they deserve more of our pity and less of our censure.' That is the only spirit in which analysis and suggestions for reform can hopefully be approached.

And so to history. James Truslow Adams has built up a big reputation for himself as the historian of the United

States: he has now turned to *Building the British Empire* (Scribners, 15s. n.) the object of which, in his opening words, is to 'consider who these people are who have so puzzled the world'; he immediately decides that 'duty, though rarely if ever talked about, seems to bulk large at the base of the nation.' That is gratifying to read, but the volume is itself a puzzle. It rather belies its title and is—as far as this first volume has gone—only one more of the many histories of England down to 1783, with very scanty reference to any Empire. A handsome, friendly, but not exactly necessary, book, the real purpose of which is, presumably, yet to be unfolded.

And finally to fiction—as far as space allows. Here at least are a few recent novels. Continuing with America first come two, Rose Wilder, Lane's *Free Land* (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.), a story of early settlers in the west that has proved its great popularity in the land of its origin, and Paul Horgan's *Far from Cibola* (Constable, 6s. n.), a short, concentrated story of life in New Mexico. Africa is the scene of Violet Campbell's third novel, *The Plain Woman* (Methuen, 8s. 6d. n.): this, though undeniably graphic, is a strange descent into wildness and sensation. From E. Æ. Somerville and Martin Ross comes, naturally, a succinct and witty tale of Ireland, *Sarah's Youth* (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.), with horses as the most human part. John Pudney delves into Soho in *Jacobsen's Ladder* (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.), an interesting, unusual but somehow inconclusive story. And, last but not least, we have D. J. Hall's *This Other Den* (Harrap, 7s. 6d. n.) and G. W. Keeton's *The Speedy Return* (Bell, 7s. 6d. n.), the first of England in 1830, the second of England and Scotland in the days of the Darien bitterness—both good work worth reading—and giving.

G.





## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

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'Such boasting as the Gentiles use  
Or ——— without the Law——'

1. 'He used to be so good and brave,  
The sweetest ——— of all our fold,'
2. 'It lies from Heaven across the flood  
Of ———, as a bridge,'
3. 'Mindful were the shepherds, as now the moon ———  
Bent a burning eyebrow to brown eve-tide,'
4. 'How the rustic flute drew the music to the ———  
Sister of his own, till her rays fell wide.'
5. 'So, one day more am I deified.  
Who knows but the world may ——— tonight?'
6. 'The lilies and ——— were all awake,  
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.'

Answer to Acrostic 180, October number: 'Tis a countenance *whose spell* Sheds a balm o'er every mead and dell. (Watts Dunton: 'Wassail Chorus at the Mermaid Tavern.') 1. *WhenaS* (Robert Herrick: 'Upon Julia's Clothes'). 2. *HeaP* (Browning: 'Song from Paracelsus'). 3. *OpE* (Thomas Gray: 'The Progress of Poesy'). 4. *SouL* (Felicity Hemans: 'Dirge'). 5. *ExceL(s)* (Shakespeare: 'Silvia').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Mrs. Morton, Charnwood House, Alexandra Park, Nottingham, and Miss F. E. Miller, 7 Macaulay Road, S.W.4, who are invited to choose books as mentioned above. N.B.—*Sources need not be given.*